

IS INDIA CIVILIZED?

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Bharata Shakti

Second Edition, in the press.

Shakti and Shakta

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IS INDIA CIVILIZED?

ESSAYS ON INDIAN CULTURE

BY

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FOREWORD

THE question which forms the title of this book is of course absurd. Even the most antipathetic or ignorant would admit that India has a civilization (as he would say) "of sorts." There is an acute difference as to the value of it. The question however is not mine but is raised by Mr. Wm. Archer, a literary and dramatic critic of note in his recent book "India and the Future." He finds India as a whole to be in the state of "Barbarism." "What does it matter if he does say so," said an Indian to me, adding "this is only the last of a long list of misunderstanding works abusive of our country and its culture." That is so, though the number is increasing now-a-days of those who respect both. Yet this indifferent attitude is a mistake. India cannot at the present moment allow any charges against her to go unanswered. I have here given some reasons why, with-

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out waiting for the completion of a larger work I had in the first steps of preparation on the general principles of Indian Culture. Lordship over alien peoples at present ultimately rests on might, though particular circumstances may render its actual enforcement unnecessary. But (apart from such implied consent as may in any particular case be held to exist) the right which Power-holders to-day allege is *cultural superiority* and the duty to raise the ruled to the cultural level religious, moral, and intellectual of those who control. It is with reference to such a duty that Mr. Archer finds India to be barbarous.

Though his book is for want of sufficient knowledge, without intrinsic value as a criticism of Indian civilization, there are several matters which, apart from the general ground stated, make it a suitable object of reply. Unlike the general run of criticisms it is written not from a Christian but a "Rationalist" standpoint. It is next a typical instance of the cultural attack, (and vehement at that) for it assails

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the fundamental principles of Indian civilization and every form of its culture religious, intellectual, artistic and social. Its vehemence may offend some. For myself I greatly prefer a candid violence to insidious attacks made under cover of patronizing or beguiling "sympathy." I do not refer to the feeling which rightly corresponds to that glorious, but to-day much-prostituted, word. As regards the matter of the book, "India and the future" is largely a re-statement of commonly current criticisms. Therefore a reply to this onslaught is an answer to others. Lastly the book in question well evidences the political basis of the cultural attack.

Mr. Archer's treats of questions of practical politics now agitating this country. With these I am not here concerned and upon them I express no opinion. I deal only with the subject of Indian culture and I am here interested chiefly to show the three causes, racial, religious and political, which are at the back of the influences making for the cultural conquest of this

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country. It is obvious also that criticism of philosophic principles affected by any of these causes is not a detached and truly rational one. In judging of a civilization we must look to its fundamental principles. Indian thought with its usual profundity and avoidance of arbitrary divisions regards Philosophy as religious and Religion as philosophical. We must therefore go to first principles, however unfamiliar such a course may be to writers on Western civilization concerned with the external aspects of social and political life. It is right to say that the truth of such principles must be judged by their result—the test of Ayurveda. But we must compare results, and if one is more defective than another we must be satisfied that the principles are in fault. For other causes may be operating. Having lived in this country for a period of nearly thirty years I am well aware of the divergence between Ideals and Facts. The greater one's interest in India the more acutely is it observed. But this charge is one which, in varying ways, can be made in

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different degree against all peoples. We must also distinguish between what is essential and of value and what is mere *crust*. There are further some matters which evoke contempt in minds characterised by the organic shapeliness of Race. Well has it been said that any want of organic racial consistency means lack of moral and intellectual coherence ; and that man in the mass fulfils his highest destiny not as an isolated individual but as a portion of an organic whole, as a member of a specific Race.

The question of the value of Indian culture is not merely an academic one. It has present practical bearing on the future of India and the World. I every day ponder upon, and question myself as to, the future of this country. Will it preserve its essential character, that is culture ? I say “ essential ” because I am thinking of its enduring principles and of their general applications. Some things are still happening which might lead one to think that it will not. Thus after this Book had been sent to

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Press I read the report of a speech of one who has been called an Indian "leader" in which he said that "English institutions were the standards by which their (the Indians) aspirations were set." We may all benefit by the example and influence of others. But it is the Racial Sun of those who speak in this way which is set. Is it possible to conceive of any ordinary, much less a leading, Englishman or Irishman, however friendly to and an admirer of, (let us say), France, saying that "French institutions were the standards by which his aspirations were set?" He would think that *his own* perfected institutions and racial ideals were the standards according to which his aspirations should be set. Is it possible with such a frame of mind to have independence and nobility of spirit? But perhaps it and other like sayings are only evidence of the occasional lingering of the servient spirit of a disappearing generation into a newly opening age of nobility, courage, vigour and freedom. I greatly hope so.

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But is Indian civilization about to be renewed or to be broken up—another instance of that disintegration which has followed the introduction of Western civilization amongst Eastern peoples? Its poison does not harm the snake but is death to others. Who can be sure that the close of the War will not be followed by movements tending to the cultural conquest of the whole of the Asiatic continent. There are events and possibilities which point this way. Moreover there is a party amongst the Indian people themselves who favour in varying degree the introduction of Western civilization; a party which in the proposed new political order may be powerful enough to achieve its ends. In every way, the coming assault on Hindu civilization will be the greatest which it has ever had to endure in the whole course of its long history.

Hope as each of us may, we have yet to see what will issue from this time fateful for us all. Here however Mr. Archer, though he intended it not, gives consolation

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to those who need it. For *his* complaint is against the attachment which the Indian people show for their culture and the stubborn resistance which India makes against Western innovations. And why should She not, seeing, that, rightly or wrongly, the bulk of the ancient peoples of the East have never admitted the moral superiority of Western civilization. Moreover Mr. Archer's book was written before, though published during the War, an event, which has, in so many ways, called that alleged superiority in question. Since I wrote the above, the last book of the late sociologist Mr. Benjamin Kidd came to my hands. After citing with approval Mr. George Peel's statement ("The Future of England" 169) that in Europe, History and Homicide are undistinguishable terms and stating that the unfolding of the Christian Religion in the West has been an unparalleled record of fighting and slaughter, aiming at worldly triumph, he says that civilization has not yet arrived, for that of the West "is as yet scarcely more than glorified

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fied savagery" (120, 121). But bloodshed is not all. For it is unsoiling and honest compared with some things which have gone on in peace. Many to-day in this country would say to Mr. Archer and other would-be lecturers—"Physician heal thyself." Nevertheless European civilization, classic in its origins, has in the past displayed a greatness actively dominant in social and political life and in science and art. Whether it will continue to do so after present and coming revolutions is yet to be seen. In any case it is not to be imitated in neglect of the principles of Indian Culture except by such as are willing to confess their inferiority.

I have written from the standpoint of the Vedânta as interpreted by the Shâkta Agama the principles of which effect a wonderful synthesis, through its "enjoyment-liberation" (Bhukti-mukti) doctrine, of the claims of the World and of the Spirit, the dual aspects of That which is in Itself One. As the Buddhist Tantra says "Let all avoid the extremes of worldly

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existence and selfish quiescence attaining success in the two ends. Let all become the Heruka Himself." I am not however concerned either to criticise or to establish the truth of any of the doctrines and practices here mentioned nor, (had I the desire) could I do so within the limits of this set of little Essays.

My object has been to state summarily and correctly the main principles of Indian civilization (incidentally removing certain common misconceptions); as also to explain the general causes of the attacks which have so constantly been made upon it. I would also urge now as ever the worship of beauty as true Form. How profoundly has it been said in Europe "Oh Middle Ages ! when will your night leave us ? When will men understand that form is not an unimportant accident, a mere chance, but an expression of the innermost being, that in this very point the two worlds, the inner and the outer, the visible and invisible touch ?" To such as so understand, Dharma reveals itself in the beauty

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of all True Forms, racial and otherwise. To such again all that is misshapen and botched is an offence.

In writing then of Indian Culture I have in mind not any soiled or hybrid developments of the time, but the principles of the civilization of old India, with its Dharma, Devatâ and Gomâtâ—a civilization in its depths profound, on its surface a pageant of antique beauty—the civilization of India of the Hindus. “This is to go back” I hear some one say. India might fare worse. But no man nor people *can* in this sense go back. If we be really vital however, we are able to, and will, maintain the present with the same splendid strength of the Racial Spirit which did the great deeds of the past.

*Ranchi,
4th October, 1918.*

J. W.

ERRATA

Page 72 line 19 for " likes " read " like ".
" 91 ,," 4 for " politically " read
" political ".
" 94 ,," 20 for " completed " read
" competed ".
" 96 ,," 20 for " red flower of the war "
read " red flower of war ".
" 138 ,," 18 for " barbarious " read
" barbarous ".
" 151 ,," 4 for " scriptures " read
" scripture ".
" 158 ,," 2 for " enquires " read " en-
quiries ".
" 167 ,," 3 for " responsible of " read
" responsible for ".
" 201 ,," 14 for " matters " read " mat-
ter ".
" 208 ,," 23 for " spirit as " read " spirit
than ".
" 227 ,," 4 for " paromo " read
" paramo ".
" 240 ,," 6 for " dependence " read
" independence ".
" 262 ,," 18 for " west is " read " west
was ".

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“Barbarian, barbarism, barbarous—I am sorry to harp so much on these words. But they express the essence of the situation . . . There are of course many thousands of individuals who have risen and are arising above it (barbarism), but the plain truth concerning the mass of the (Indian) population—and not the poorer classes alone—is that they are not civilized people.”

“India and the Future” by William Archer.

I

The same author in the work above cited complains that this country “in its inmost

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heart resents and despises progress." We should know what he means by "Progress" and "Civilization" but he nowhere tells us. There are Indians who think in very nearly the same way as their teachers the West does. One of such discussing the subject called himself a "Hindu progressivist." The bulk of the Indian people however do not believe in "Progress" in the materialistic sense in which that term is commonly understood in the "liberty loving and progressive" West; to use a phrase which rolls off the tongues of some Indian politicians as if their country knew nothing of a liberty and progress of its own. But that is not to say that the people do not believe in progress at all. They have a different conception of it.

A young and very "modern" Moslem once said to me. "It was from the time that Europe became prosperous and fat that it became 'progressive'."

The remark is applicable to certain notions of "progress;" such for instance as that which conceives progress as merely the

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increase of scientific knowledge, the development of industry, the conquest and harnessing of nature to serve man's material needs; and as a world getting healthier, richer, happier and generally more comfortable and refined and therefore more (in this sense) "civilized."

The notion of progressively increasing material comfort is on this view dominant. Moral improvement is also looked for, but as the necessary condition of an orderly, peaceful and industrious world. The lower expression of this ideal has been compared to a model farmyard with its healthy wellfed domesticity. Rude war has swept away these imaginings.

What was the impulse towards such and other "progress?" It has been rightly perceived that an impulse towards progress is inherent in man's nature. But the meaning and direction of the impulse was misunderstood. The message of the vital impulse made in the service of the enfoldment of Spirit was read in material terms only. It is also a noteworthy peculiarity

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of Western notions of progress that they contemplate a future in which the whole-world shall have arrived at an equality of high development.

And yet there has always been an impulse towards progress and a progress in fact. What is the meaning of the word "Progress." Most of those who use this and the term "Civilization" would be hard put to define with exactitude what they mean. From an Indian standpoint however this is clear: and it is from this stand-point that I write.

If by the term "Progress" we mean that at any particular time the sum total of happiness is greater than it has been at any previous period, then it can be questioned whether progress is in this sense established. True happiness in this world consists in the natural harmony of Spirit, Mind and Body.. Is there more of this to-day than formerly ? If there is one thing certain it is the present lack of inner and outer harmony. Even from the material standpoint, the alleged progress is not proved. ' What is

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apparent is more happiness in some ways in one age and in other ways in another age. Thus medicine and surgery are more efficient to-day but the general healthiness of a primitive people had little need of them. Anaesthetics are urgently called for by our modern sensitivity. Earlier ages were able to bear suffering with both lesser pain and greater fortitude. If we are happier on account of our anaesthetic they were so by their greater robustness. Is it better to have good dentists or good teeth and so forth ?

“ If by “ progress ” is meant that the individual soul (Jīvātmā) evolves from lowly origins through higher forms to man, there is such progress. Ages before Lamarck and Darwin it was held in India that man has passed through 84 lakhs (8,400,000) of births as plants, animals, as an “ inferior species of man ” and then as the ancestor of the developed type existing to-day. The theory was not, like the modern doctrine of evolution, based wholly on observation and a scientific enquiry into fact but was

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rather (as some other matters) an act of brilliant intuition in which observation may also have had some part. This evolutionary process has hitherto been effected by struggle in which one form of existence, whether as species or individuals, has made advance at the expense of others. The plant nourishes itself on the earth, the animal on the plant, man on the animal and plant and on his fellow men. Species conflict with species and individuals with individuals. For though man does not now (except amongst some savages) devour the flesh of his brother to build up his own ; he yet still lives upon his fellow in other ways ; warring upon and killing him to acquire his land and other wealth and to free himself of obstacles in the way of self-development ; warring upon him economically, making himself richer at the other's expense ; feeding or warring upon him culturally, either appropriating his psychical acquisitions where suitable or destroying them where opposed to his own.

For thousands of years man has seen

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moving across the face of the world grand migrations of peoples. From ages now remote, waves upon waves of his tribes have clashed with one another, now conquering, now suffering defeat, exterminating, absorbing, now dispersed and again swarming to repeat the unending battle by which the Soul of Humanity has been tempered and brought to fresh expression. This conflict has continued until to-day and at this moment terribly manifests. In later times there was added to the naked assault of the sword, economic invasions and struggles and more subtle cultural conflicts. For souls as well as bodies battle. During these immense periods and amidst inner and outer struggles man made his advance in social progress through various stages of savagery, barbarism, and civilization. Gradually culture developed in its various forms as Religion, Philosophy, Literature, Science, the Arts and Social Institutions.

What is the meaning of this process called the "struggle for existence." This phrase only denotes the superficial aspect

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of this conflict. Why this conflict at all and for what purpose and end ?

Let us see what an Indian answer is. The one fundamental Substance or Consciousness (Chit) and its unmanifested Power of activity (Chidrûpini Shakti) appears through this Power in dual aspect as Spirit-Matter (Chitshakti and Mâyâ-Shakti) at the same time mysteriously retaining Its own nature (Svarûpa) as Changeless Spirit or Consciousness (Chit). In the words of the Veda the One said. " May I be many." The Spirit or supreme Self (Paramâtmâ) whilst in one aspect retaining Its own formless transcendency, in another aspect becomes involved and immanent in Matter which is the product of Its Power in order that the individual selves (Jivâtmâ) may, in the world of form, enjoy and suffer the fruits of their previous actions (Karma) in successive births. At the point at which the Cosmic Mind projects itself upon, and is conscious of, the material plane, the universe of individual selves is born in forms of varying development according to their

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previous cosmic history. With the completed appearance of the Universe involution ceases and the evolving process commences, that is the evolution of matter so as to become a finer and purer vehicle of Spirit until Consciousness releases itself of mind and matter and enjoys pure unlimited and perfect transcendental experience. The Life-force (Prâna-shakti) which is a Power (Shakti) of the Eternal Being (Sat) moulds gross, and apparently inert, but in reality highly active, matter—with its constituent factors (Guna) revealing (Sattva) and veiling (Tamas) through its activity (Rajas) Spirit or Consciousness—into the organised plant form, the consciousness of which is as Chakrapâni says in the Bhânumatî of a dormant or comatose kind. In the inorganic kingdom the active factor (Rajas) of Power (Shakti) as the material cause (Prakriti) makes the veiling factor (Tamas) suppress the ever concomitant revealing (Sattva) character of all material substance. Hence so called “brute matter” appears as unconscious and inert though in truth it

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is Consciousness deeply veiled in matter which is incessantly active. For the whole universe is in incessant motion and is hence called Jagat (moving). In plant life Tamas is lessened and Sattva more greatly reveals consciousness. The difference between plant and animal life has always been regarded by the Hindus as being one not of kind but degree. And this principle is applied throughout. This is not so according to Christian Theology according to which the body and soul of man is not like that of other living creatures; for their bodies and souls were made of earth whilst the body of man was alone made of earth and the soul came from without, being breathed into it by God (St. Tho. i. p. q. xci. art 1.) When man was made God afterwards, of a rib of his side, made woman to show, it has been said, (Ven. Louis de Ponte S. J. Meditations vi. 264, 272, 274) that "he was not created principally to attend to generation as other living creatures are" for "work in matrimony is a work very base." The animals were

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created so that "man might recreate himself with the sight of so great variety and beauty of creatures; for if it be so great a contentment to see an elephant what it will be to see so many together or some other beast which we had never seen."

Life and consciousness are not products of evolution. The latter merely manifests it. The individual self (Jīva) then manifests as an animal which is also full of darkness (Tamas), though in still lesser degree, owing to the greater prevalence of the revealing constituent (Sattva) of matter; for it shows a greater manifestation of consciousness which seems to display itself largely, if not entirely, in what we call animal wants. Animals are of higher and lower forms, the former showing a greater and greater manifestation of consciousness. At length the individual self (Jīva) clothes itself in the form of man, the birth which the Scripture calls so hard to get (Durlabha). If therefore man does not avail himself of the

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birth, so hardly won through innumerable ages, he is called a “Self-killer.” In man Sattva more greatly predominates than in any purely animal form. Here consciousness recognises its limited self or Ego and is fully awake to the objective world. Here it enters the world of ideas which are a superstructure on the fundamental substance or Consciousness and not its foundation or basis. Here also it enters the realm of conscious morality one of the aspects of the eternal Dharma. This Dharma is the constituent principle of the universe ; that which makes anything what it is (Svalakshanadhâranât Dharma) and therefore governs and upholds (Dhâryate) all manifested being. But in man it exists in the form of what is generally called Morality or the principle of conduct, and in those concepts of his relation to all Beings, and to Being itself or God which is the theological aspect of what we call Religion. Sattva which is the spiritual portion of man’s vehicle of mind and matter because it reveals Spirit or True Consciousness

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manifests itself more and more in wise and saintly men until in the accomplished (Siddha) Yogi the material vehicles which are a projection of consciousness disappear. He is then on release from the body (Videha mukti) identified with the Pure Spirit which is Consciousness-being-bliss (Sach-chidānanda). There has always been this identity in fact but it is then realised. Thus as Matter more and more evolves it becomes a more perfect manifestation of Spirit or pure Consciousness.

Just as the Gnostics (who in this borrowed from India) spoke of the Material, Psychical and Spiritual man; so the Indian Tantric scriptures divide humanity into three classes (according to the prevalence of the Gunas) into the Pashu or animal man in whom the veiling principle (Tamas) prevails; the Vīra or Heroic man in whom the active principle (Rajas) is dominant; and the Divya or divine man in whom, owing to the abundant operation of the principle of matter which reflects and manifests Spirit (Sattva), the

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latter in increased degree of purity shines forth.

The meaning therefore of evolution is not merely the development of matter into more and more highly organised form ; but such organisation exists for the purpose of Spirit. Spirit which involves itself in that product of Its Power which is matter, organises that matter into finer and finer meshes until It is released from it.

The vital progressive impulse of which we are conscious is the impulse of Life to so organise itself that it may become a more and more perfect vehicle of Spirit. This impulse it is which organises matter into gradually ascending forms ; and which, when man is reached, works in him to effect his spiritual development. Civilization is a process which when rightly understood has the same end. It may and does produce some material comfort but this is not an end in itself, but when rightly employed a means whereby man's mental and spiritual nature is given greater play on its increasing release from the animal

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cares of life. That then is true civilization which recognising God as its beginning and its end organises men in society through their material and mental vehicles with the view to the manifestation of Spirit in its forms as true morality and true religion. Thereby man first recognises his essential Divinity and then realises it in his conscious union with the Self as manifested in the whole Cosmic process and then as transcending it. For there is but one Shiva ("The Good") who is thought of in dual aspect. From the transcendent aspect, Spirit (Paramâtmâ) changelessly and blissfully beyond all worlds (Vishvottirna) *is*. From the immanent aspect It by its Power (Shakti) *exists* that ~~is~~ appears in the form of the world (Vishvarûpa). As there is only one Shiva-Shakti or Consciousness and Its Power, it follows that, whilst in one aspect such Consciousness ever enjoys that Perfect blissful Experience which the Scripture calls the Supreme Love; in the other it both enjoys and suffers in the imperfect or

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world-experience. Whilst therefore neither in the Divine Ground or Godhead (Parabrahman) nor in the creative God or Lord (Ishvara) is there any duality of opposites ; yet God in His form as creature that is *in* and *through* and *as* Man and all other beings suffers and enjoys. Shiva appears both as the individual being (Vyeshti) and as the collectivity (Samashti) of all finite beings inhering in the infinite and unlimited Lord. Religion, in its highest form, consists in union with " the Good " (Shiva) or God in both His and Her aspects ; that is by identification in Virabhava of the individual self with the totality of selves, with the cosmic process, and then with its Lord, which is known as the gross union of feeling (Sthula Samarasya) in the world of a World-form with the World-Lord (Shivo'ham—I am Shiva) ; and the subtle union of feeling (Sukshma sāmarasya) beyond all world-forms in which the Self experiences the Self in all its perfections which is the completed Divyabhava.. We are each instruments in the eternal

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struggle of matter to free spirit. Know this and serve rightly. If man so understands the Cosmic process he will know why it is a struggle: and if he both thus knows and identifies himself in fact with it he will be freed of fear even in the presence of its most terrible forms. If beings fight with and devour one another in the early stages of evolution it is to subserve the evolution of Spirit. Unconscious of it though most of them be, they are each a sacrifice on that altar on which the self is offered to the Self. In the nature of things past no other process was, in the first stages of development, possible. In the animal stage each being lives on others. Forms war with and devour forms. Races, nations and civilizations conflict and absorb one another. At the back of all is this Great Urge of Spirit clad in form to return to Itself, which we are apt to interpret in shallow ways as if such Urge were towards mere material existence lived in comfort as the end. Until the true end is reached there must be some suffering;

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since imperfection persists until its achievement. Man moreover would rest upon the way and neglect the pursuit of his final ends. The clash of matter and mind-expression or cultures is the building up of better forms for the expression of Spirit. This clash of forms becomes less gross, and the necessity for it becomes less great, as the mass of men gain in moral value. At present one being lives on another ; one conflicts with another in the process of evolving and perfecting forms. In the same way souls in their cultural expressions are at war. What is inferior will be thrust out by what is better. Wherever and whenever also unrighteousness (Adharma) exists there must be a battle to overcome it for the establishment of Dharma. That this struggle on the whole subserves the development of forms and the greater manifestation of Spirit is clear. Otherwise it would be a meaningless and horrible conflict. But to justify each detail of this process may be more difficult for want of knowledge. Not only do men and animals war with one

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another, but nature in the form of storm and eruptive fire, in the earthquake and in disease war with both. We may believe, as Hindus do, that all being related, atmospheric and other natural disturbances only exist where man's Dharma is at fault; that the cause of happenings in this world may be only found in past universes; and we may remember that of the economy of the present world and of the functions of all its forms of life we have as yet but imperfect knowledge. Yet who, having faith in a Divine Order, can doubt that—whether every instance is capable of certain present explanation or not—the general nature and object of the process is revealed? Let each take up his position and fulfil his part therein without vulgar animal hatred. This, the doctrine of the *Gîtâ*, is one of the grandest doctrines which India has taught. Man should endeavour to do all acts, and should even righteously fight, not from personal animosity or with the desire for personal gain but selflessly as a soldier in the human

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hosts of the Lord to whom is dedicated the fruit of every action. Were all men of this spirit we should not see unjustified aggression. As I write these lines the morning paper reports the advice of an American clergyman preaching to the employees of a submarine boat company at Fort Newark. After consigning his enemies to Hell and advising the employees to "hammer the face off" his propagandists the Reverend gentleman revealed the crudity of his "religious" beliefs in the following utterance "when I stand before the judgment seat of the Almighty I want to be able to look my God in the face and tell him that I gave the Germans at least one good wallop before I shuffled off." This is not the spirit but the vulgar antithesis of that of which I speak ; and yet most probably, the preacher—a doctor of divinity—thought, as do betters of his cloth, that he was quite capable of teaching this country religion. Or again according to the sublime view of the Shâktas man will know himself in all his actions

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to be Shiva and His Power the Universal Mother: saying Shivo'ham "I am Shiva;" "Sâham" "I am She;" and will find that in his self-identification in and with the Cosmic Process as the expression of a Power which is his own essential self, all vulgar hate, all merely personal desires and aversions are gone. He is Shiva in the form of the universe accomplishing its purpose. He who knows himself as such is the incarnate Spirit of World-Order. And when and in the degree that that World-order is established, men will work *with* and not *against* one another and will even sacrifice themselves for one another; knowing that if, in the past, evolution has advanced through discord, with spiritual knowledge the path is Harmlessness (Ahingsâ) and Harmony.

II

One of the oldest of problems is the conflict between East and West which is now becoming more acute owing to the growth of populations, increased communication, a closer contact of cultures, growth of knowledge, economic questions, the assertion of the Asiatic Consciousness, the intensity of the struggle for life and other causes. The whole world is now in ferment preparing for the next great advance in the evolution of the race. Once there was greater equality between East and West which was disturbed by the white man's conquest of the sea ; leading in the case of the English to world dominion. Asia, however, once played her role. By a succession of vast onslaughts, She, as has been well-said, "shook and hardened Europe to new life." Before then, Greek and Roman had struggled for mastery with Oriental Empires. Thereafter the Huns carried fire and sword into the heart of Europe. Later

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the Arabs conquered Spain and poured across the Pyrenees to be smitten by Charles the Hammer: and yet they retained parts of Spain for hundreds of years imbuing Europe with their great learning and culture. Then followed the Second Tartar invasion when the Mongols were defeated under the walls of Vienna largely by the aid of Hungarians, themselves nothing but Asiatics left behind from the flood of the first invasions of the fifth century. Finally, the Ottoman Turks, rivalling the military success of the Arabs, captured the whole Byzantine Empire and were only arrested after immense struggles along the line of the Danube, thus terminating in the fifteenth century the vast series of forays undertaken by Asia against Europe with which in the course of a thousand years there was an unending conflict; for with the Turks (though their Empire is now threatened) the last word has not yet been spoken. Through this hardening process the white man's position in the world was established. As an American writer, whose conclusions I here,

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in his own language, summarise ('The Conflict of Colour' by B. L. Putnam Weale) points out, another factor in the Evolution of the white races was Christianity, not because (according to his view) Christianity as a religious system (that is institutional Christianity) had special value, but because it supplied just that inspiration and organization which were needed by rude and unimaginative peoples to give them discipline and to intensify the conflict with Asia and Africa. "The political mark which the Christian Church has consequently made in Europe, can never be wholly effaced ; though it is a mark entirely different from anything which could be anticipated from a reading of the Gospels" with their essentially spiritual and other-worldly and therefore Eastern message. Thus by the time of the last Turkish forays a new Europe was born and the position of East and West was reversed. The latter conquered the sea. To the European the whole world was unmasked, and, landing on the most distant shores, he made rapid conquests with the modern

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magic—explosive matter. If India be once again mighty, those who now ignorantly speak of Her as “uncivilized” will at least not dare to assert it. Whilst it is a demoniac notion that the power to harm alone gives civilized title, that power, it must be admitted, at least ensures a kind of human respect.

The Christian middle-ages (whatever was their practice) possessed a beautiful ideal; an ideal of human unity and of the blending of the spiritual and temporal. With the discovery of America and of the East and a declining Christianity, Europe cast its eyes abroad and became predatory. The sense of unity was lost and the period of base exploitation began. Money became more important than land (for Feudalism had rested on an agricultural basis) and “Vulgar Nationalism” (as a friend of mine calls it) arose, and being reinforced by the coarse industrialism of the “age of the machine” became more and more aggressive, until in our day it has met with its natural retribution. The Portu-

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guese, the Dutch, the French and the English imposed, by force and with desire for trade and loot, their will upon the Asiatic. The Spanish Conquistadores in the Americas were called by that humane apostle Las Casas "destroyers of the Indians." In India the work of conquest went on from the sixteenth century until the age in which we live. Throughout and in every instance there was the worship of brute force. The Portuguese, the Spaniard and the Dutch gradually lost their pre-eminence. Then followed England's struggle with the French when She at the close of the Napoleonic Wars was found the victor. Macaulay says that, until Clive went to India, the English "were despised as mere pedlars whilst the French were revered as a people formed for victory and command." But from the moment that England displaced France, her history became world-history and her land became covered with worldly renown. By the middle of the Eighteenth century, just prior to the birth of the present European civilization, the force

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of the European attack had been spent and matters moved more leisurely ; but, as the independent author, I cite, says, the old tradition remained and was acted upon, wherever possible, strengthened by the inventions of a scientific age. Suzerainty was displaced by the notion of actual ownership. Later still Power covered itself and its actions with what he calls some "pleasant fictions." To the honest these are hypocrisies which time will sweep into the sink of all other falsities.

Again Asia reacts and as the author cited says "In the far East the return swing of the pendulum is clear ; in the middle East it has commenced ; and elsewhere smaller oscillations have to be noted in Egypt, in Morocco, in Algeria and in the French Soudan."

This was written four years before the present European War. Of the great European Powers in Asia before that event, France and Holland occupied a subordinate position to the Russians and the English. The predominance, as I write after the

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internal strife in Russia, rests with the last mentioned alone who now seems to hold the key to nearer Asia. As Dr. Yujiro Miyake in his article on "The future of Asia" written in January last has said, "Hitherto Asiatic countries have changed, so far as they have changed at all, diversely and independently according to their racial traits and history. But at present great changes are going on in all countries of Asia simultaneously. It is a change more colossal, far-reaching and profound than any that has taken place in the past." Not the least of the influences operating is the European War. This War, if read rightly, marks the close of an epoch of civilization, and, through it and its aftermaths, both the feudalism which yet lingers in Europe and particularly in England, as well as the modern purely materialist industrialism is likely to disappear. Even now what was before 1914 is seen as an old world. The close of this epoch also definitely affects both the relations of, and balance between, East and West. The same writer says that "If

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the 850,000,000 people of Asia become self-conscious and begin to display the latent forces of democracy, the whirlwinds for which Asia has been famous for ages, will grow in magnitude and sweep round the world. The whirlwind of Asia has already circumscribed the globe and is now just starting on its second circuit with greater vehemence than on the first journey. Already it is beginning to effect mighty changes in Asia itself." The movement is of profound interest to a world seeking to know where it will end. No wonder that another writer of the same race (which some think may assume the hegemony of this movement) states that the Christian missions are labouring harder than ever since the War to extend their religion in the East; no wonder is it that missionaries of race and culture are by attack or persuasion endeavouring to get the East to adopt, in place of its present inherited civilization, their own. The "coloured peril" and the world-peace will, it is thought, be more vastly diminished if the

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East is westernised than if it retains its secular ideals and practices alien to the life of Europe. The cultural attack by Europe on the East is, in short, an effort to save its own psychic possessions by the assimilation of that which opposes them, and (let me at once say it) this is for Europe, in this era of conflict, right, if done in sincerity and with truth ; for each must defend his own. Similarly India's Dharma is to stand by Her cultural inheritance and to repel all assaults upon it. Were the English to absorb the Indian civilization which the spread of the English language ideas and customs threaten, its people would not be monsters on that account. The act would only show that those of this country were fit to be eaten. It is for them to say whether they shall be so or not. Hitherto military might has been with Europe. By the exhaustion of the present War it will be shorn of much of this strength and will need all its powers to reconstitute itself internally ; possibly after social revolutions. Moreover there are

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signs that allegiance to the reign of brute force in the west is weakening and commencing (though the way may be yet long) to disappear. But apart from this, the Japanese writer has truly said, "The lands where Confucious, Buddha, Christ and Mahomed were born and taught (and wherein, we may add, the immortal Upanishads appeared) are possessed of a power greater than military force and may yet be able to change the face of the whole world. They have not much money or anything that visibly impresses worshippers of the things of this world, but they have vast numbers of people, many of whom have brains and souls more significant of real manhood and real living than all the wealth of occidental materialism ;" which however, I may add, is only a passing stage in what has been (despite its modern vulgarians) a vital civilization with elements of greatness.

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The Racial Soul is itself ultimately a physical stress or stresses in the Universal Consciousness in the form of the Sangskâras or impressions left on the soul by its past incarnations, racial and individual, manifesting as mind and body. Each race both as the original typal imagination (Kalpanâ) and its materialisation is a particular form of the general Power (Shakti) who is the Mother of all. India is thus in a literal and not merely figurative sense the Mother and (as a form of Her) the object of worship, that is God appearing *as India*. Therefore true service of Her is worship of Him. The author whom I have just cited has given the opinion that in patriotism as expressed by the Salutation to the Mother "Bande Mâtaram" may be sought "that reinforcement of character which is falsely declared to be the peculiar property of religion." This is to misunderstand both the phrase and what religion is. By India is not meant a particular stretch of the earth's surface peopled by men of varying worth and lack of it. Why should

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anyone worship these except in the belief, that it and they are a grand display of the Power of God to whom alone all worship is due and Who alone can be the inspiring principle of any effort towards national or racial regeneration and advancement.

What is called racial culture is, again, an expression of the Racial Soul enshrining Spirit, as such Soul displays itself in all those forms of thought (Jnâna Shakti), will (Ichchhâ Shakti) and action (Kriyâ Shakti) which are called Religion, Philosophy, Art, Literature and the Institutions of social life. As race and nationalities are in physical conflict so are their souls and their cultures each trying to impose itself upon, to influence, or absorb the other. It must not be supposed that such cultural conflict is meaningless. No cosmic process is without meaning. It is in truth a fight for the Soul of the World for the purpose of its evolution ; not that the persons engaged in such conflict are necessarily aware of, or impelled by, any such motive. More often this is not so. Individuals may act selflessly.

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But past history shows us that the actions of masses of men as races and nationalities.. are determined, in the main, by self-regarding motives, whatever may be the veil of hypocrisy with which in modern times they are covered. Just as man has developed a sense of physical shame which makes him cover his bodily nakedness, for he is no longer natural and not yet divine : so he has recently developed a sense of moral shame which urges him to clothe his naked political selfishness with apparent altruisms. Nothing is more hateful than such hypocrisy to any lover of the truth, nor a more fruitful source of distrust among men, nor a greater enemy of co-operation, if it be believed to be possible, between naturally opposing interests. Yet two things should be remembered. The first is that such hypocrisies may be the presage of a better time when honesty will be more generally regarded as a state and a communal as well as an individual duty. And the second is this : even if man is at present, in general led to become, an instrument of the Divine Order through

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the belief that what It plans is profitable to himself, yet even his selfishness may promote what (though he intended it not) is good. The Divine Alchemy transmutes for its ends even the most rebellious elements. Those who have faith in God know that notwithstanding all obstacles He prevails. Dharma infinitely endues beyond the death of those who, spurning it, will yet be crushed by it.

The struggle between the peoples takes on a more massive shape when it assumes the age-long form of the contest between Asia and Europe. For there is what may be called an Asiatic as well as an European Consciousness. It may be hard to define each of these with clearness and precision ; the more particularly that there are races in Europe which are in fact Asiatic in blood and temperament just as some Eastern peoples are modifying themselves under western influences. As regards these last it has been said that some Westerns now realize that though their inventions and their forms may be readily

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accepted, the spirit of the Eastern remains : and that, no matter how much externals may be altered, men retain certain unalterable qualities and ideas which are rooted in climate and environment ; and more deeply (I may add) in their inherited Sangskâras. However all this may be, the Eastern and the Western now and for ages past have possessed distinctive qualities ; though it is to be noted that the difference between the Hemispheres which prior to the industrial epoch presented many points in common, has become accentuated since such date. Even to-day there is less difference between a Catholic adherent of the old Christian tradition and a Hindu than between the so-called "Modernism" of the west and the culture of the latter.

Whilst India exercised an influence upon the culture of the Mediterranean peoples, it was, however, in accordance with its genius, no party to the armed attacks on Europe, only one of which (that of the Arab) directly contributed to the intellectual advancement of that Continent. On the

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other hand, notwithstanding some unimportant exceptions (such as the persecuting bigotry of the Portuguese), the European invaders were neither in a position, nor cared, to influence the life and thoughts of this country. They were satisfied with its money and other treasures. The Mahomedan rulers of India were, on the whole, (with some fanatical exceptions such as Aurangzeb) content to administer, without seeking to affect the beliefs and practices of the races which they ruled. Moreover, then both the rulers and the ruled were Asiatics. So also the early English settlers, first engaged in trade and then in conquest, did not concern themselves with what the Indian believed or did in matters not directly and materially affecting themselves. Their energies were devoted to the security of their position and trade. With, however, the gradual settlement of the Country after the Battle of Plassey, English Culture was brought to bear on it. Even however in 1830, Sir Thomas Strange complained in his "Hindu Law" of "the

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almost universal indifference as to what regards India further than as our own direct interests are involved." Both the trend of evolution and recent events have since led to a gradually widening outlook. The most important happening in the first half of the 19th century was the defeat of the Orientalist party amongst the English in India and the determination to forward the teaching of the English language. The importance of this decision cannot be overrated, for thereby English ideas and ideals came in time to be spread throughout the land and were even accepted by some of its people in place of their own. The result of the famous Minute of 1835 was the resolution of the Government of Lord William Bentinck "that the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science amongst the natives of India and that all the funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed in English education alone." Whatever might have been the views and aims of individual

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members of the English as opposed to the Vernacular party, a determining factor of the decision arrived at was the self-interest which has, hitherto at least, been the ultimate basis of all political action. In this particular instance, there was the utility to Government of Indians trained in the English language and other reasons which have operated till to-day when the English educated Indians vastly exceed in number those to whom official employment can be given. Sir Charles Wood's despatch of 1854 furthered English education and resulted in the formation of a Department of Public instruction together with the outline of an University system. From this time forward English education was more and more organised in Government hands. Even private schools were subject to a system of inspection so as to approximate those institutions to the ideals and efficiency of Government schools. In 1882 Government Control was somewhat relaxed. In 1902 increased direction was insisted upon. Without going into details it may be said

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that practically the entire control of education and therefore of culture (so far as school and university training is concerned) is in the hands of the Government.

To this must be added other causes in conflict with the maintenance of the traditional culture—economic and social. Were it not that there has been no general primary education, and that such education as is now given is necessarily confined to comparatively few, and to the fact that there has been a rise of national consciousness, the whole of India was likely to have been Anglicised. All this is part of the process whereby a dominant race at first works by force of arms, and then, when free to do so, by cultural assimilation. Wherever there is resistance to such assimilation, there is a conflict of culture and ideals. There is in the present competitive stage of evolution no question (apart from the means employed) of right or wrong in such conflict for those with sincerity engaged in it. Indeed Dharma works through such conflicts for the establishment

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of what is right. Subject to the condition stated, any one nation, such as the English, are entitled, if they can, to impose their culture (in the worth of which they believe) on others; the more particularly where, as in the case of India, so many showed themselves to be clamant for it and indifferent to their own. What other could they give? Perhaps in a future co-operative stage of evolution each people will be left to work out its own appropriate evolution according to what in India is called *Svadharma*. On the other hand, it was from their standpoint a sure and true instinct which led (what I may call) the fully Indian wing of the National Party to attempt the revival of Indian Culture and, notably, of Indian Religion. The same reasons naturally led to an opposition to that culture. This opposition has been accentuated in recent times by reason of what Mr. William Archer has called "aggressive Hinduism;" a phrase which reminds me of the complaint of the wolf against the lamb, and of the French sarcasm "This is a

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wicked animal. It defends itself when it is attacked." (C'est un méchant animal. It se défend quand on l'attaque). It is noteworthy that the little work called "Aggressive Hinduism" is from the pen of that ardent Irishwoman Sister Nivedita. By continual assaults, often of a contemptuous and abusive character, this country is being gradually goaded into an active defence of its culture. And it is well that it should be so. When a blister is applied, the patient may call out. But we do not lament at the cry. We say that the medicine works. If India is aroused from its lethargy thereby, such attacks, however unjust they may be in themselves, will serve a useful purpose so far as this country's culture is concerned. There are many who misapply Yoga doctrines to cases for which they are not intended. Non-resistance is both in Christianity and Hinduism the mark of a Sannyāsi. But there are others who have renounced nothing but dignity and courage. He who is truly selfless needs no other weapon. But he who is in and of the

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world will protect himself by action. It is necessary for all to defend with sincerity what is of worth in the inheritance got from their forefathers if they would escape the death which shadows degenerate descendants. And such defence is now to some, but insufficient, extent being made. It is true that some in their newborn enthusiasm speak of Indian religion and philosophy conquering the world, and a few, notably that man of upstanding courage, Svâmî Vivekânanda, have preached their faith abroad. This is the action of all sincere believers. The charge of aggressiveness on this account ill lies in the mouth of those who are continually (and may be naturally) vaunting the excellence of their own civilization, its faiths and practices. India, however, true to its principles will never force itself by violence on any. It asks only a fair hearing, having trust that the truths, of which it believes itself to be the guardian, will of their own strength establish themselves. Truth in whatever form needs

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nothing but itself to win the minds and hearts of men. And so we see once more Indian ideas (without material aid) commencing to influence the world thus rousing to strengthened combat all those who from racial, political and religious motives are opposed to them. A missionary who has lived in this country for a quarter of a century in a work published last year ('Christian Thought and Hindu Philosophy' by A. H. Bowman) writes as follows :—

" On returning to England after long absence, and trying to gather together the threads of theological study in the west, the author is amazed to find the extent to which Hindu Pantheism has already begun to permeate the religious conceptions of Germany, of America and even England. Again and again in the following pages reference is made to the subject. It needs a far more subtle brain and cunning hand than the author possesses to describe in detail the extent of the danger with which this trend of thought must threaten, if not the present generation, certainly the

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generation following : but this ought to be done and to be done without delay.” As regards “dangers,” I say nothing, for I am not here concerned to establish the superiority of any doctrine, or practices, or to contend for the superiority of any civilization. To me, though one may make greater personal appeal than another, all serve the ends of God who as Truth will alone prevail. Worshippers of the Vedânta will think that this passage reveals the reason why Indian civilization has been almost alone preserved throughout the ages; and that this is because through its Vedantic teaching India was destined to be Jagadguru—the Spiritual Teacher of the world. Each must meanwhile promote and defend what he sincerely believes to be true. I say “sincerely,” for, as regards religion, (the most important of all forms of culture), the man who defends a belief which he does not think to be true for merely racial or political reasons, sins by his untruth against the law of that ‘Light’ (Jyotih) which in Hinduism

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as in Christianity is the 'Illumination' (Prakâsha) which lights all in this world. I am only concerned here to show that India has, notwithstanding recent denials, a civilization of high value, and to explain the reasons which prompt the statement that it has not yet emerged from 'barbarism.'

Mr. Archer, in his book ("Future of India"), says that if a rational world-order be possible, the future of India becomes a matter of absorbing interest, because it offers, so to speak, a test case. "For one of the great obstacles to a stable equilibrium among the peoples of the earth lies in the immense differences in the development of the different races. If, in a case so conspicuous as that of India, the obstacle can be overcome, and one fifth of the human race can in the course of a couple of centuries be emancipated from mediævalism and fitted to take a place among the peoples who are shaping the future, then the solution of the whole problem will at last be definitely in sight." This

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passage as usual assumes the entire superiority of the writer's civilization. Are we sure that there will ever be such "equilibrium upon the principles hitherto governing the Western peoples." Conflict will never cease until the reflection of the Great Peace is shrined in the hearts of men. Assuming equilibrium to be in this or a future stage of evolution possible, it may be that elimination of differences will lead to it. The question is, on whose side differences are to be eliminated and what is the nature of that equilibrium to be. The Western will ordinarily and naturally consider that, if there is to be an assimilation, it must be of East to West. Whether that will prove to be the fact will depend on the relative values of these general cultures and the strength of the adherence which they respectively receive. I will say with certainty that, whatever happens, the influence will not be wholly one-sided. Even the victors in racial conflicts bear the marks of the peoples they have subdued. Nothing is ever lost, all is transformed ; and that for the ultimate good.

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IV

Just as the bodies of races physically conflict, so do their cultures. Victory over the soul is greater than that over the body. Military and administrative control affects chiefly the latter. A cultural conquest means the subjection and, may be, destruction of the psychic possessions of the Racial Soul which is then transformed into the nature of that of the victor. Language affords a notable example of such cultural dominance. A people who abandon or who are compelled to abandon their language for that of another lose themselves. Language is the means by which cultural ideas are expressed and handed on. There are certain ideas and feelings which can be expressed by particular languages alone. Thus it is not easy to write metaphysics in Latin ; whereas Greek and Sanskrit are

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highly efficient for this purpose. There are many terms in Sanskrit for which it is impossible to find an adequate English translation. In short, only a race's own language can express its soul. Those who speak a foreign tongue will tend to think foreign thoughts: those who think in foreign thoughts will have foreign aims and tend to adopt foreign ways and so forth. For these reasons dominant peoples have sought to impose their language on subject races as the completion of their conquest. We may here call to mind the attempted enforcement of the German language on the Polish people; and in the British Empire the opposition to the Dutch language in South Africa and to the French language in Canada. Lately it has been made (so I read) an offence to teach any subject in French in the English provinces in Canada. It is hoped doubtless thereby to supplant in time French culture by that of the Anglo-Saxon. In this country there is no law which compels anyone to learn English; but compulsion

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exists all the same for those who would pass through School to University, who would qualify for Government service or for any professions. Such direct or indirect imposition of culture is in the nature of things. Dominating races must necessarily affect others. Those who complain of it waste their time in what is futile. Instead of complaint they should maintain themselves and their own. Failure to do so is the biological sin. What fails to find defenders is not worth preservation. Nothing is ever wholly and lastingly lost which is worth such preservation. What is absorbed is without the value which attaches to that which has the power to independently exist.

In the earliest times food and desire for loot, and sometimes woman, were probably the chief impelling cause of battle. Now, conflict of races and their cultures is due to various causes—racial, religious and political. The first is at present rather of a negative, and the two others of a positive character. The racial cause manifests.

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largely as a force passively resisting assimilation. Its most powerful manifestation is that in which it is combined with religion and politics or either.

The world is composed of beings which as classes and as individuals differ from one another. Man differs from man according to different colours and each coloured division is subdivided into various races. We call such differences of classes types. These types are varying aspects of the One Cosmic Mind. Being projected from Its Unity, it is reasonable to suppose that this projection was not without cause and that though types do, at one time or another as all else, disappear, yet Nature intends and devises means for their perpetuation until the purpose for which they have been created, shall have been served. How are these racial types preserved ? The answer is—By what is called Racial Antagonism. There is nothing “ wicked ” in pure Racial Antagonism for those who know no better. The antagonism is natural. Nature preserves her types by estrangement, distrust

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and even hatred and not by love.. For this reason, Western races of strong vitality will not cross with Africans or Asiatics. (The stronger the vitality, the greater is likely to be the antagonism. The stronger the antagonism of a type, the less is the likelihood of its being influenced or absorbed by another.) Until he receives a spiritual initiation, man is thus the enemy of man. This is the natural or animal law.. There is then learnt a higher spiritual law which at first tempers, and ultimately abrogates, the other through the knowledge that all men are kindred expressions of the One Self.

Racial antagonism, however, is not to-day (at any rate upon the Eastern side) acute except where it is augmented by religious or political conflict. It undoubtedly exists ; but I myself doubt whether an Asiatic positively hates or fears a white man simply because he is white. When he so hates or fears him, it is because of the latter's assumption of superiority ; and because of his past political aggressiveness.

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which puts the former's country, wealth and culture in danger. Thus, the early European visitors to Asia were well received. So, again, the first travellers to Thibet were freely admitted into that land. When it was, however, discovered that a country into which a Western entered was in danger of being taken by his people, a natural racial antagonism was re-inforced to such extent by political considerations that a state of positive enmity was aroused and thus Thibet was closed to the Western world. In the same way, the white man's contempt for the man of colour is largely due to the former's assumption of superiority and the latter's subservience and acknowledgment of it: a superiority which, so far as material force is concerned, has been justified for about the last two hundred years. When, however, an Eastern coloured people showed themselves the fighting equal of the Western, then racial antagonism did not stand in the way of exterior respect and political alliance. Even racial antagonism

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yields to political interest. Racial antagonism is thus, from the cultural aspect, rather something which resists attempts at assimilation than a force which seeks to impose itself on others. A meaner form of Racial Antagonism is racial jealousy which manifests itself, amongst others, in the orientalists of lower mind and which is the cause of their constant belittling of things Indian. A Russian friend of mine and a great traveller told me some years ago that all the orientalists he had come across in this country and many elsewhere disliked, notwithstanding and perhaps because of their study, India and all its ways. As the religious and political factor did not come into play I asked him to what he attributed it, when he answered racial jealousy.

In earlier times the religious factor was of great importance. Thus we read of Crusades, Jehads and persecutions. These animosities still exist as between Christian and non-Christian religions, as also between Christians themselves; notable instances of which are the quarrels of Catholics and

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Protestants in Ireland and of Hindus and Mahomedans in this country.

The vital question of Religion which is the most important element of culture may be considered either from its own standpoint, or from that of racial and political interests. In more sincere ages the Christian religion was sought to be propagated on its own account, that is because of its supposed truth, and this is still the fact in the case of sincere believers. In the first case the meaning and nature of the conflict is clear. The Christian missionary still carries on warfare against Hinduism ; which one of them has recently stated to be "A great philosophy which lives on unchanged whilst other systems are dead ; which as yet unsupplanted has as its stronghold the Vedânta the last and most subtle and powerful foe of Christianity." ("Christian thought and Hindu Philosophy" by A. H. Bowman). After many centuries of occasional missionary effort and a century of constant labour there are in this country not quite 4,000,000

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Christians, and some 311,000,000 Indians who are still what they were ; though it is the fact that a considerable number of the latter have been influenced both by the sacred personality of Jesus and by certain modern Western ideas which (it has been pointed out) have come to the East in such close association with Christianity that it is not always possible to distinguish between one influence and the other.

Jesus, however, did not bid His disciples preach His word abroad to serve any political or racial interests. It is true that good may follow in the train of right and religious living. But the vulgarity of turning religion into a means of money-making and Empire-building has been reserved for our political and commercial time. It is a greater abuse of what is sacred when these manoeuvres are worked by persons who have no religious faith in the doctrines which, for other motives, they seek to propagate.

Institutional Christianity is not necessarily the same as the teaching of Jesus.

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It contains elements drawn from Western civilizations anterior and subsequent to His earthly manifestation, and is now associated with secular aims and ideals which are rather the product of modern social and intellectual developments than of His essentially unworldly Yoga doctrines; even though in some cases they may perhaps be harmonised. His teachings are what He in fact taught. "Christianity" is what others thought He had taught; and it is worth just as much as their thought is worth and not more unless it be held (as Catholics do) that to the Church has been given a power of infallible interpretation. Such universal truths as were taught by Jesus will, when rightly interpreted, find ready acceptance in India which also proclaims them. The essentials of Jesus' teaching were said before Him and have been taught by others. The strength of Christianity consists in the personality of its founder. Acceptance of the Christian Religion will (if it all) the more speedily come when Christianity is no longer

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associated with the notion that it is the religion of a ruling western people and when its doctrines receive an independent interpretation by the Indian mind. That interpretation will lead to something far different from what a witty Irish writer calls a "jolly theology" with its Christ in the character of "a good sportsman" the "Padre" a "good fellow" and I may add in India the dog-cart the station club, and so forth. Meanwhile it does not accept western interpretations of Jesus teachings from the hands of those who have a very imperfect understanding of what they mean. This country will honour only the Christian Sannyâsî whether living in or withdrawn from the world. In ancient times men were not hired to preach Hinduism. Those who did were actuated by love and duty only. Nor did nor does it try to thrust itself upon unwilling people or make their miseries or worldly ambitions its opportunity. At present the religious conflict is largely due to the fact that Christ's doctrine, comes to this country

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in a Western guise, which is no essential part of it; a guise which often misinterprets it. Thus an Indian might find in the Bible (as many Westerns now do) support for his theory of Re-incarnation and knowing what a Yuga is he would not understand "aeonian" loss to be the equivalent of eternal damnation. It has been well pointed out that even the late Pratap Chunder Mozoomdar who was most western in culture and Christian in piety wrote of "the *Oriental Christ*" and not of the Anglicised or Western Christ. In addition to this, conflict is provoked by the fact that some missionaries have sought to de-nationalise their converts. Mukhyopâdhyâya (if they succeed by a rare chance in attracting a Brâhmana) becomes Muggins or the like. Dhoti and Chudder yields to shirt and trousers; and the eating of beef erects a barrier against relapse into Hinduism. A different treatment is to be found amongst some Catholic missionaries who have gone great lengths to accommodate themselves to Eastern principles and

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practices including caste in this country and ancestor worship in China.

Many instances might be given of the exploitation of Christianity in support of political interests. It was in this sense that it was said by a French minister. "Anti-clericalism is not an article of export:" for religion attacked at home was found to serve French Colonial aims and the maintenance abroad of French interests. And in other countries the Cross has been made synonymous with the Flag, and the Flag with Trade, whether to use President Wilsons recent words " the persons to whom it was taken welcomed it or not." What Asiatic or African has been consulted ? In Europe Christianity has been for many centuries a strengthening (though for some time past a diminishing) force politically ; consolidating and giving strength to European civilization. There are, it has been said, ("Conflict of Colour," 119) those " who still believe that as it will be in our day impossible to bar out the hordes of Asia and Africa, the only safeguard for

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Europe and the white man still lies to-day as in the past in Christianity ; and that the impossibility of allying themselves with other creeds is perhaps the reason why instinctively the great movement towards Christianising the coloured world is growing stronger and stronger in Anglo-Saxon countries as a sort of forlorn hope launched to capture an almost impregnable position.” And so also it has been alleged that the Christianising of the Negro, weaning him from the militant bent of mind he assumes under Islam will, as diminishing racial and political danger, have in the future much greater political importance than it has to-day. The author cited is not ashamed to supply an example of political Christianity of his own and to confess that “ the part which the white man is politically called upon to play in Africa is the part of “ Delilah and no other ” for if he says the black man “ is Christianised, his destructive strength is stripped from him, as was Samson’s when his locks were cut.” Elsewhere, that is in countries which have a

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real civilization and religion of their own, as in India, he thinks the hope of a general Christianisation is illusory for "it is there looked upon as a disintegrating force, a purely European thing, aiming at destroying the most essential parts of social fabrics which have been slowly and painfully built up through the ages." He adds that "it is a strange fact which has often attracted the attention of unbiassed observers that Asiatic converts to Christianity are not only denationalised but (save in rare cases) are not morally benefited ; the very effect of breaking away from the support of their natural environment being an unnatural one and therefore visited with bad effects."

Mr. William Archer, who is not a Christian, writes in a somewhat similar strain : ("India and the Future")—For him Christianity is only a "half way house " to civilization ; for nothing is apparently quite civilized unless it bears his "rationalist" approval. He says, however, that whilst he would himself "disown" the

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religion in his own land, it is good for India which he regards as an essentially unspiritual country. Its acceptance by the Indian people will bring them "half way" to true "civilization." Until they are "according to a liberal interpretation leavened with Christianity (in which he himself personally disbelieves) they will be "unfit for freedom." That is, after the "half way house" stage is reached, the notions then acquired must be further "liberalized" when there will be competency for freedom. Freedom is, of course, political freedom for the political motive and standpoint is that of his book. The true religious missionary propagates his religion because he sincerely believes it to be the truth and that the truth will benefit India. Mr. Archer would, for political motives, foist upon it a "half way house" in which he himself disbelieves, in order that the Indian people may be thereby "civilized" enough for political freedom. Until that point of time, which seems from what he says to be remote, they are appa-

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rently not to have it. Because of the political service which missionaries thus render by the assimilation of West and East Mr. Archer says "that it did not long take him to throw off a vague prejudice against the missionary which he brought with him to this country."

A Japanese author Dr. Enryo Inouye in a recent article shows that the Western has his imitators in this also in the far East. He writes :—"Religion has always paved the way for extension of Western nations overseas, and why should it not do the same for Japan? In Africa, India, China and the islands of the South Pacific, Christianity always preceded the flag and opened a way for the development of the nations preaching the new religion. We have imitated the occidentals in other ways; why not in this way? While Christianity is losing force in the home lands of its propagandists, it is gaining force and influence in the countries overseas. It looks as if it were the policy of Western countries to take away from the forces of Christianity

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at home and apply the extra force to lands abroad to make way for the greater influence of the countries represented ; and this is especially true in the Orient.” He, accordingly, advocates that the Japanese people should give every attention to the propagation of Buddhism in foreign lands “to prepare the way for our national influence and as the first step for the empire’s future *enrichment.*” The Buddha is thus made into a kind of political bagman.

The Commercial note so characteristic of some forms of modern Western Christianity is seen in the “Church Advertising and Publicity Department” of “The Associated Advertising Clubs of the world ;” the report of the twelfth convention of which has just been published (Lippincott). The Executive Secretary’s paper on the “First successful Church Advertiser” asserts that “the Church was born with advertising plastered all over it” and closes with the assertion that “Christ did not do His own advertising. He created the talking points on the

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interests of the new Church. Great was the Company which published them. And the first successful advertiser was the one of this Company to get out and plaster the country side with posters reading "Repent come and see one who claims to be the Christ. Hear Rabbi Jesus the teacher who has all the other Rabbis guessing." Another clergyman writes "Why the world needs our goods" (that is Christianity) ; and others continue with papers on "Delivering the goods advertised" "Preparing the copy" for "Church advertising is the display window of the biggest business on Earth" and so forth. There is one thing in the West which is happily missed in the East (unless where the European has introduced it) and that is vulgarity in these and other matters. This "playing the role of Delilah," "half way houses," the whole vulgar policy of "Church Advertisement" and of Bibles, Bottles and Battalions" will like other falsities fail of any good effect.

The religious factor in the conflict of East and West is becoming however of less

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importance in comparison with the conjoined racial and political factors. In the first place, Hinduism in the persons of its higher adherents has never been disposed to intolerance. Indeed in its higher form it has been so tolerant that it has been charged with being "indifferent to the truth. " "Fanatical" or "indifferent" the blow is delivered both ways. The lower mind in India as elsewhere is not always free from narrowness but it has been in considerable degree influenced by the wide outlook of Vedantic teaching. On the other hand, whilst there is still some talk of "heathen darkness," tolerance has become more widespread in the West. Large numbers have ceased to be "Christians" in anything but name; and believing Christians either from disposition or necessity have largely drawn in their horns of aggression. What are called "liberal" ideas are spreading. It is thought that religion is a private affair, that liberty of conscience is sacred, that the religion which any civilized country has evolved is presum-

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ably the best for it; that if there be a revelation at all it has not been confined to one people, nor to the adherents of one faith and that religion, the essence of which is the upholding of our common humanity, should not be made a ground of conflict and of enmity between men. It is noteworthy that just as racial antagonism displays itself most strongly when combined with causes of political conflict, it is the same with religious antagonism. Thus in Ireland, the feeling between Catholic and Protestant would not be so acute as it is, were not the question of Home rule involved; and in India the differences between Hindu and Mahomedan are commonly said (with what truth I cannot say) to have increased since the recognition of separate Electorates and the struggle for Government patronage. So dominant are politics now-a-days that even religion is made to serve their purpose.)

I do not here desire to discuss practical politics but certain general principles of

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universal application only with a view to ascertain their bearing on the cultural question now under discussion. The very fact of political dominance of one race over another involves either an unconscious or conscious influence on the latter's culture. Just as a commanding personality (whether he wills it or not) affects the men who surround him; so does a dominant race affect the people subject to it. In some cases the influence is automatic; in other cases it is predetermined. In either instance the result is the cultural assimilation of the subject race to that of its governors. If that subject race is savage it is both for its good and for the profit of the ruler that it should be rightly civilized. As Macaulay, speaking for a commercial people, said "to trade with civilized man is more profitable than to govern savages." As regards India he expressed the opinion that it was a doting policy which would keep "millions of men from being our customers." Mr. W. Archer is of opinion that the lesson which this country has to learn is "to want

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more wants." There is nothing "spiritual" about this doctrine nor is it, as so crudely stated, a sound and satisfying one, at any rate from the point of view of those addressed. The Vishnu Purâna more truly says that by feeding your desires you cannot satisfy them. This doctrine will not be found of benefit from any but the trader's standpoint. It is however the fact that the adoption of the counsel to "want more wants" may lead to the increased purchase of English motor cars, Scotch whiskey and so forth. The pockets of such a "civilizer" are filled when he gets the uncivilized to learn this part of his lesson. So on the banks of African rivers naked savages are taught to "want more wants" in the form of Brummagem beads and the like; they on their side parting with ivory to the white trader. It is on the other hand absurd to suppose that the Indian hugs his miserable poverty.

Conquered savages without culture, properly so called, take over that of their masters. But in the case of a country like

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India which (*pace* Mr. Archer) is already civilized the problem is not so simple. Two courses are open: either to leave the governed race to itself, subject only to the natural influences which flow from contact; or to deliberately undertake a policy of "education" in accordance with the ideals of the Rulers. In this country we see both courses in operation. Politically there are advantages and disadvantages attending either of the policies. If the people be left to themselves, as I understand is more or less the case in the Dutch Indies, there is always a certain danger from the continuance of interests, aims, and ideals alien to those of the rulers. On the other hand if the ruling race educates its subjects in its own culture, it must follow that in the degree such culture is acquired a claim to equality and governance will be made by the latter which the former may not, at any particular moment, be disposed to concede. On and before such cession of power certain advantages from the point of view of administration are gained by the cultural

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assimilation of the ruling and ruled races. This policy necessarily involves a time when all "inferiority" ceases to exist; and the two races either then enter into a partnership of administration, or the foreign ruling race altogether gives place to that which it formerly governed. These two possibilities are kept in view and present policy is framed with reference to them. Mount-stuart Elphinstone said of India "A time of separation must come and it is for our interest to have separation from civilized people rather than a violent rupture with a barbarous nation." Sir T. E. Colebroke enjoined that meanwhile "we must apply ourselves to bring the natives into a state that will admit of their governing themselves in a manner that may be beneficial to our interests." He also added "as well as their own and that of the rest of the world;" a qualification which means little, if anything, should the first aim be kept in view and acted upon. For if the subject interest be different from the ruling one the latter must be served according to the first

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part of this passage. If the former interest be the same as the latter there is no distinction at all. Cultural assimilation is thus a perfected form of conquest initiated by force of arms. Whilst it, in some degree, helps administration during the continuance of foreign rule; when that rule ends it considerably compensates for the loss of it by the amalgamation of material interests, aims and ideals which it effects. The cultural assimilation acts as a compensation for lost political control. Much the same results are attained by both. Whilst a foreign administration exists the subject people may be directed by external control in a direction which subserves the former's interests. But when that administration ceases, such people may serve the same class of interests of its own accord, if it has been first culturally assimilated with its former masters. The cultural conquest is so complete as to render political control (which in fact can be no longer kept) unnecessary for the furtherance of the former ruler's interests. Thus if the English

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were in a body to leave India to-morrow they would leave an uneffaceable, and in several respects good cultural influence upon it. But in order that that influence should be both lasting and complete, assimilation (according to the policy discussed) must be brought to that stage in which political control may safely be surrendered without danger to the interests of those who formerly had possession of it, as also of the general civilization of which theirs was a particular form.

The cultural and political aspects are different sides of the same question. Again looking at the matter from the Indian standpoint; whilst political Home-rule might be attained through adoption of the civilization of the foreign ruler, there would in such case no longer be a Home (in the Indian sense) to rule. Those who then ruled themselves would be an *alias* of their departed rulers; a people who in the language of Macaulay would be Englishmen in everything but colour. His well-known observation is a classic statement

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of cultural assimilation. There are already a certain number of this type whom their more national countrymen call "Black Englishmen." If Indian culture has value and is worthy of preservation (a matter which those who inherited it must determine) it is obviously their duty to resist any such cultural assimilation as threatens it. As I have said before and here repeat, the question of political loyalty must not be confounded with the right to the possession of one's soul even if the complete possession of it may (as I think it will) have in the future a political effect.

The British Government has given some support to Indian culture in its encouragement of Sanskrit and otherwise. Such is the air of suspicion in this country that some of its well-meant endeavours in this direction have been charged with being a machiavellian plan to keep the country enslaved and in ignorance. Such is the value which these persons attach to their culture. To the Western orientalists (imperfect in understanding though they may

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sometimes be) this country is indebted. The State has adopted what it thought to be a policy of " neutrality " as regards Indian religion and has not consciously interfered with Indian law or custom except when the latter was deemed to be not consonant with humanity. The fact that English is the language of the ruling race has made its acquisition a practical necessity. For though there is no law compelling its acquirement, all by force of circumstances must learn it if they would not rest employed in humble services. The teaching of English and its literature has immensely forwarded English ideas to which there has been hitherto no sufficient counterpoise in the shape of the study of Indian literature. This can not however be subject of complaint against the State until a demand is made for it which is refused. In fact the Indian people (I mean the English educated section) have only in recent years commenced to value what is their own. Were this not so, it would not have been necessary in the case of some to place

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Indian culture under their nose and to say "Look, see ; this is your own. It has value. Respect it." In one case (of which I am informed) there was Indian opposition in an Indian university to the appointment as lecturer on Indian philosophy of a mere "native Pandit." It was apparently thought that even Indian philosophy requires an English education before it can be taught and understood. Even now there are Indian professors of philosophy who have knowledge of European and American philosophical systems and know little or nothing of the Sāṅkhya and Nyāya or Vedānta. There are also persons who I believe take it more to heart if they are told that they do not speak good English, than if surprise is expressed at their not knowing their own language or knowing it properly. As regards Art it is only recently that the same section of the Indian people have taken any interest in its Indian form ; and that largely through the initiative and aid of Europeans.

Education again is almost entirely in

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State hands and has hitherto been substantially of an English character. If attention has not been paid to Indian culture it is due primarily to the fact that the English educated sections of the community have not, as a rule, made any demand for it. Some of them are quite content with " Indian Etons " and the like. How can the State be expected to understand or to teach Indian culture ? Why should it give that for which there is no demand ? It gives that which it considers best namely its own ; and which if accepted will also, it thinks best, serve its particular interests and the general interests of its own form of civilization. The English moreover naturally suppose that that for which the Indian shows no appreciation is not worthy of it. It is for the latter if he values his culture to insist that it shall receive at least equal, if not preferential, treatment.

Again the presence of a powerful but alien civilization, naturally and without any State interference whatever, affects every department of Indian life. The

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joint-family and caste system seem to be weakening. Whether and how long they will exist only the future will show. The village life as it was is ceasing to exist. With the crowding into towns English habits are acquired as also English modes of living. The old collectivist spirit has to some extent given way to individualism and so forth. Some of these changes were perhaps "inevitable" though I do not like the word. In the flood of change care must yet be taken that one is not swept off one's feet. Similar changes are of course at work in the West. M. Le Play in his books on the working men of Europe found in 1864—1878 the agricultural and family system to be almost everywhere undermined. And this is of course still more so in the present. Christian writers note with complacency the influence of the "Christian Spirit" in disintegrating Hinduism. But similar forces are at work in the west disintegrating Christianity.

Lastly the so called " neutrality " of the State as regards Indian religion has in fact

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worked against it. As the French Catholics long ago pointed out to their anti-clerical Government there can be no such thing as neutrality where religion is ignored. True neutrality is to recognise and support all religions impartially. Indian religion has in the past been mainly learnt, where it has been learnt at all, from the mother ; herself as a rule lacking the education which is her right. As the schools and universities have hitherto ignored it, the youthful mind has followed its teacher's example. For the sake in part of cheapness, and also in part of efficiency, Indian boys are sent to missionary schools or schools conducted by Christians, from which some students have returned to their homes in the belief that their parents (if they themselves had any belief) were dark "heathens." In this way the Indian Dharma is being lost and often no other definite conception of life and its duties has been acquired in its stead. For formal Christianity (it is admitted) has not made headway amongst what are called the

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educated classes. Many of these have shown themselves ignorant of, and indifferent to, the principles and practices of their country's religion. If it be replied that these are not taught in the State schools, those who have any regard for their religion should either insist upon a change in this respect or start schools of their own. I am fully aware that there has come in recent times a change in Indian opinion as regards some of these matters but it has yet in general to be materialised; and I am now speaking of the past which has produced the present of which this book is a short review. Valuable work for instance is now being done by Sâdhus in spreading a knowledge of one of the crest-gems of Indian literature the Gîtâ; and the next generation may see (if the spirit which prompts this movement prevails) a wider appreciation of, and adherence to, the principles of the Vedânta and of its practical application in the various schools of Agama—the Tantra Shâstras. There may also be an Indian form of Christianity.

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Thus on the whole the influences at work have not been, and under the circumstances probably could not have been, such as to encourage the propagation of Indian civilization. To some extent these Western influences have worked for good ; in some cases they have had ill effects. One of the worst effects is the vulgarization of the refined Indian life as it existed in ancient times. I cannot think it good for India that it should altogether surrender its distinctive self. Others have co-operated in this work besides the State namely missionaries by spreading Christian and Western ideas ; and lay writers and others who believe that the acceptance of Western principles of civilization will be for the good of this country as of their own. All these forces, whether official or private, will work, if not opposed, for the cultural assimilation of Indian to English civilization. It is obvious that, whilst in this the English are carrying out their Dharma, India has a Dharma of her own to follow. For unless She admits that Her civilization

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is without value, and is ready to throw it on the scrap heap of things past and gone, She must uphold it. It is nothing to Her whether it be more politically advantageous to Her Western rulers that She should liken Herself to them or not. This is not Her's but their concern. As the *Gîtâ* says, each to his own Dharma. "Better one's own Dharma than that of another however exalted."

What form the future may take we can not with certainty say. But of this I am convinced that if we each do our duty by our country and our forefathers and maintain what is best, and has not suffered corruption, in our respective cultural inheritances, the result of such rivalry cannot be other than good. Healthy rivalry is better than a cultural Olla Podrida. Nature Herself will effect the elimination of unnecessary differences. A good result is not likely to be attained if India wholly surrenders Her soul to foreign influences unless we assume (as I do not) that those influences are entirely good; and that

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Indian culture is so worthless that there is nothing to be done but to get rid of it as speedily as possible. It is because these principles have not been hitherto generally understood that predominance has been given to the political aspect of India's future to the neglect of her cultural interests. Political freedom is nothing for those who have lost their souls and that Spiritual Autonomy (Svarâjyasiddhi the Shâstra calls it) which is the greatest of possessions. It has been rightly said that the saying "For what is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world and lose himself or be cast away ?" applies not only to the individual but the Racial soul. This self-maintenance of Indian civilization is also for the world's good. Its further advance depends on the guarding of all its spiritual and cultural wealth, not by the neglect or abandonment of any of it. The Universe is the Body of the Lord and every fraction of it is as such sacred. In the light of this idea when once fully grasped it will be seen that whilst it is the duty of each man and each people to

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uphold sincerely and with right motive their selves and interests, it is not their own good but that of the world which they thus, under the guidance of Ishvara, ultimately serve.

In the cultural attack a considerable part has been taken by English critics of this country's civilization. The most recent and comprehensive of these attacks is the book by Mr. William Archer which has suggested the title of my own. Others have expressed themselves adversely touching either Hindu religion, or philosophy, or art or so forth. But Mr. Archer includes them all in one widely sweeping review, leading to the conclusion that this country is not yet "civilized" but in the earlier state of "Barbarism." His reviewer in the "Times" expresses himself well pleased at these conclusions. He like Mr. Archer is indignant that a few Europeans "have achieved a cheap and very mischievous popularity amongst Indians" by assuring them that their "gods" (it is always thus with these people) and their culture "are far greater than ours" and "that there

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resides in the inner shrine of the Indian soul a transcendental spiritualism denied to the Western soul." He commends therefore the manner in which Mr. Archer "in very luminous chapters supported by unimpeachable authorities tears to pieces" these "myths;" passing "under review the teachings of Hindu Philosophy, the master-pieces of Hindu literature, and the various manifestations of Hindu art *without finding anywhere any great moral or spiritual concept capable of uplifting a nation.*" Thus neither the Vedânta or Gîtâ contains any such concept not to count the rest of Indian Shâstra. Then referring to self-government, the National Congress, and social reform (without which this class of English criticism is nowadays incomplete) and describing Mr. Archer as a genuine and candid "Friend of India," it concludes with the enunciation of the now prevailing policy of cultural assimilation by saying "It is in the slow process of *educating up India to our own ideals* that the only path lies which can lead India to salvation."

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His book though not based on any real knowledge of the subject he discusses, being largely a restatement of criticisms passed by others before him, has yet peculiar interest for it reveals the motive which (though not in general expressed) underlies this and some other present-day writing of its kind. It is an example of the political aspect of the cultural attack to which I have referred in previous pages. What in effect Mr. Archer says is this:—A time must come when India will govern itself. Whether the country will govern itself independently or as a part of the British Empire he leaves to the future. The present condition however of India is barbarous and therefore not in conformity with Western and in particular English civilization. It will be harmful to the interests of the latter and the world-peace if India is given political autonomy at the present time. For as his first cited Reviewer says:—“Hindu society as it has been moulded by many centuries of religious tradition, philosophic thought, and unchanging custom

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is almost inconceivably far removed from those out of which the democratic institutions of our own country have sprung." Before therefore such autonomy can be safely conceded, India must assimilate Herself to Western civilization that is with (as he calls it) "the nations shaping the future;" upon which movement it seems India is a drag. The position then is this:— India must either surrender her distinctive culture or renounce, until She does so, any hope of the political autonomy She seeks. If She will not change Herself, then She must remain in a political subjection which will ensure that She does no harm to anyone but Herself. Ruling and world interests will not then be endangered. If She elects to change and bring herself into line with the rest of the world, this cultural assimilation will remove all dangers which would otherwise attend the political autonomy She seeks. It is because of these political aspects of his book that his reviewer in the "Times" give it a warm welcome and calls it "timely."

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As I have said before I am not here concerned with any question of practical politics and express no opinion whether such political autonomy should be given or refused, now or at any other time. I state simply the motives which prompt this attack (as also others which are made to-day) so that we may judge the value of this class of criticism which is neither disinterested nor endowed with knowledge. Criticism has true value only when given in detached service of the truth. Religion, philosophy, literature and art are subject to their own tests. It must of course be admitted that the cultural condition of a country is a test of its capacity to be left to look after itself. In this criticism, however, mere personal likes such as "rationalism" European literature and art; and dislikes such as Metaphysics and "Supernatural" religion; and political prepossessions (such as English "liberalism") either take the place of, or outweigh, any solid criticism based on an understanding reasoned and detached examination,

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according both to their own and alien standards, of the leading features of Indian culture whether existing in the past or to-day. Mr. Archer is of course not peculiar in having prepossessions. They affect other such critics. Impartial judgment is rare. For this one must, as Carlyle said, have the capacity of placing oneself into the skin of other people so that we may think and feel as they do. To do this one must sacrifice at least for the time being all Egoism or Ahangkâra. This I may observe is apart from the valuable critical result obtained a useful spiritual exercise.

V

I have spoken of the past and present world as an era of conflict. And so it has been and still largely is. Amidst animals it was a purely animal conflict, as it also was and is amongst man, to the degree that he is still bound up with the animal element in his humanity. Not only has there been conflict but it has been rude and brutal. How else could savage man be made to understand? Even the "civilized" man of to-day must often have his own flesh ground in misery before he can sympathise with the world-suffering. It is said in the Buddhist Tantra that the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas have four methods by which they subdue and save sentient beings of which the fourth is "the stern" or method of downright force. And thus it is said in "The golden rosary of the history of the Lotus born" (Padma Thangyig serteng) that the demoniac

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“ Black Salvation ” the Matram Rutra was impaled.

Throughout the past and in the present animals and men have made their advance through conflict. Each man and people in the struggle for existence has lived on, and overpowered others. Their good has been attained at the cost of others. Like the animal each has lived on the other. This is the so-called basis of the biological theories of life commonly current. The facts are correct enough. The error of those who exclusively hold these views is in making past and present fact a rule of conduct which absolutely justifies such conflict in the present as in the future, and thus looks to nothing beyond. An historical fact has thus been raised into a pseudo ethical theory.

Because animals and men have completed amongst themselves in savage struggle for existence, which struggle was justified according to the stage of their evolution : and because some men may still do so in accordance with such stage, is no reason

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why they and others should be enjoined to continue such struggle, and should ignore the rising conscience which speaks of a more spiritual advanced stage to follow. This is to sin against the Light which it is the object of the world process to unveil more and more to man's power of spiritual vision. On the other hand there is no sin provided there be good faith. Throughout the ages the illuminate Masters of Humanity, incarnations of the Humane Ideal in and evolved by man's mind, have taught the unity of all being and have anticipated in their presence the yet unfolded future of mankind. Their teaching has had effect but has been without complete result. For man is not raised at once to the level of these manifestation of his and their common Spirit. And so we still see, particularly in the West, an irresponsible individualism in every sphere of social life with the motto "Each for himself and let the devil take the hindmost:" a principle of selfishness which, if not to-day always openly expressed, is still acted upon by many, both as individuals

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and as national bodies in their political aggressions. As each individual seeks its own interest, so do the nations. The chief meaning of this great war is that its occurrence marks the climax and close of an epoch of conflict which at first natural, and then modified by Christian ideals burst out again on the loss of those ideals in a corrupted form, and with the greater vehemence by reason of increased knowledge and the development of scientific instruments of death. The force principle, biologically creative as regards the successful in life's conflicts, and destructive as regards others, has reached that maximum of intensity which perhaps marks the commencement of the close of the first great epoch in man's evolution. Progress is gradual and therefore though as has been said, the red flower of ~~the~~ war may die down it will be sometime before its seed has gone.

What will follow ? An Indian writer in a recent number of the "Vedânta Keshârî" has well outlined what he calls the "three

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policies " of individual and national conduct and their relation to the Vedânta. According to the first each man and nation in order to secure his and their life puts every other to suffering and to the risk of losing their own. This is the competition policy of nature. In the pre-family stage each man fought against each other man. Then each family fought each other family. Then there was the first organization of the Community the object of which was to end both individual and family conflict. Then communities fought with communities, which became larger and larger, until nations fought with nations and empires and confederations with one another. This struggle, open or veiled, between Peoples reacts on weaker societies and by disorganizing them recreates individual struggle among the latter. This struggle can only end with the organization of the whole human family. Mankind should according to the Vedânta learn to live without harm to any man or nation, and then he will, as India has done, do reverence all animate being. To

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such as have this consciousness all conscious harmfulness is sin and harmfulness produces suffering. As the Buddha said “ Hatred is not cast out by Hatred. Hatred is cast out by Love.” The first policy creates struggle between men and peoples, and assists the natural development by the negative force of racial antagonism, rivalry and selection. At this stage men and nations think of and act for themselves and not for the Self Whose body the whole universe is. None is safe and men and nations rise and fall ; and so long as this principle prevails will continue to do so.

The second stage of spiritual advance is that of the “ Concert policy ” when each lives in concert with every other ; a stage in which there is struggle both for individual or national life and for the life of other individuals and nations. Mankind is developed into this stage through the cruel disciplines of the first, and by the teachings of the spiritually wise who have never been absent from humanity. For Man has That in him which ever guards him. By

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the previous struggles the body and mind, as vehicles of the Spirit, have been prepared for the succeeding stage in which by recognition of human unity the positive or co-operative and benevolent forces of nature are brought into play. The circle of Man's interest is widened from himself and family with which it commenced to the whole of humanity and then to the entire universe. Sarvam khalvidam Brahma "All this is verily Brahman."

The last or third policy is that of sacrifice in which each gives himself for the good of others who are now known to be aspects of the one Self. This has yet to come. For the second stage has (if at all) barely commenced for most. Meanwhile, as the writer I have cited has acutely observed, the sacrifice must be a conscious sacrifice. If a nation sacrifices itself ignorantly, as the weaker nations are doing, it will fall into a state of individual struggle and then disappear. There is, I may add, no merit in the lamb or the goat who goes in ignorance to its slaughter.

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In every stage there must be strength and power ; a will which determines its end : a will for self ; a will for self and others ; or a will for others at the cost of oneself. Be ever strong. Meanwhile and until the world as a whole has advanced beyond the era of conflict each people must at least defend itself against aggression and show that manliness without which our common human nature is disgraced. Without such defence the guardians of the great Eastern tradition are in peril from (to use the words of the late sociologist Mr. Benjamin Kidd) " the dark, efficient, and terrible West."

The Vedânta of the "barbarous" Indian people teaches that the Universe is the Self appearing to the limited self or Man. All being is one. It teaches that when this is known, man will not harm or live at the cost of another. To harm another is to harm oneself. As Shiva in the Kulârnava Tantra says man "should do good to other beings as if they were his own self." (Atmavat sarvabhûtebhyo hitang kuryyât

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Kuleshvari). Each fraction of the body of the Lord should, whilst preserving itself and holding to its duty, help the other to preserve the harmony of the whole. Hinduism has provided for this organization within India and amongst its followers by the wonderful Varnâshrama Dharma. Though the evolution of the world has hitherto not called for it, the Vedânta also supplies the fundamental principles upon which international relations may be built. Where can be found a finer saying than "To do good to others is the highest religion?" Paropakâro hi paramo dharmah. This is true civilization and India has evolved it.

VI

Now-a-days one hears a great deal of the principle of self-determination by peoples: that is each people should be allowed to work out its own development without outside interference from others. It has been rightly said that this is also the principle of Svadharma which was proclaimed by Shri Krishna on the banks of the Sarasvatî river in Ancient India. All nationalists amongst politically servient peoples have always claimed this right for their country. But it is new doctrine in the mouths of dominating nations. The Editor of the Hibbert Journal writing recently in a London Weekly says: "What is wrong with Germany is simply that she has never learnt to mind her own business and leave other nations to mind theirs. She claims the right to impose her own culture on the rest of the world without consulting it." What European nation however has minded

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its own business and left other nations to mind theirs; least of all those peoples who have planted themselves all over the earth ? The Editor of the Hibbert Journal says that if civilization had been grounded from the first on the law of “ minding one’s own business ” with less said about “ doing good to others ” there might not have been so much wealth, but what there was would be worth more. We should be doing each other more good than by what is called social service. There would be less idleness, less inefficiency, less ugliness, less dirt, less shoddy and above all less humbug—less in short of everything which darkens the future of the earth. However this be, the Western has not, in general, admitted any such principle as regards Africans and Asiatics, peoples whom he regards as inferior races, to civilize whom, with some profit to himself, is the so-called “ white man’s burden.” What however he objects to is the administration of his own civilizing medicine to himself. Whatever may be done elsewhere he now objects to any

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external interference and aggression as between European themselves. It is quite easy to understand the objection. But if an Asiatic may be "improved" and "civilized" through the domination of a "superior" people, it may be asked why should not an European power dominate for its good one of its fellows. On the other hand if we strictly apply the rule that each people should mind its own affairs; what if it minds them badly? The principle stated gives no right of interference. All European nations have in fact been acting on the principle of interference with other's affairs. Whilst they in fact interfere for their own profit it is possible to give other grounds for their action. Thus it will be said that there is no indefeasable title to any part of the earth's surface. It belongs to those who can rightly use it. Only those can best use the earth who represent the highest state of evolution at which the human race has arrived and with whom power in fact resides. Therefore uncivilized or less civilized

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races may be displaced. The dispossessor in more modern times assuming the role of trustee combines self-profit with the duty of uplifting his ward to the level of the trustees own civilization. Thus India is alleged by Mr. Archer to be barbarous and the duty of leading Her in the direction of civilized ideals is said to be incumbent on its rulers, a more advanced and progressive people. Each of the leading European powers however considers itself to be highly civilized and therefore any attempt by one to impose its culture on another is resented as uncalled for impudence. Such an one however who might seek to impose it would justify himself on grounds similar to those which are admitted to apply as regards "inferior" races. He would claim that his culture was so superior to the rest as to justify its spread and predominance.

It may be that to-day we are witness to a great change in the relation of the earth's peoples to one another; but as regards the past, from the dawn of history until the outbreak of the great war the principles

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governing the relation of one European people to another or to Asiatic and Africans was force and gain. If it was profitable to dominate another people and if it was possible through the latter's weakness it was done by all the European peoples. Until quite recent times no one thought of alleging that what was undertaken to gain profit for oneself was done with the object of benefitting others. It might *in fact* benefit them which is another matter.

Is it possible to apply and will the principle of non-interference be applied even to-day ? Will true savages and barbarians be allowed to manage their own affairs on the principle of self-determination and be left either to work out their evolution for themselves or to go lower and then perish. If the principle of self-determination and Svadharma is not applicable it is not likely that at any near date we shall see a philanthropic nation prepared to undertake the education of a backward people without profit for, and perhaps at cost to, itself. On the other hand there will be many claimants for this

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“ burden ” if the carrying of it produces a profitable wage. Probably the exponents of the new morality would say that whatever be the profit to the uplifter it must, in order to justify his dominance, be shown that it is also in some substantial degree for the benefit of the subject people. Profit to the governors must be combined with benefit to the governed. In some cases the dominance may be complete, in others less so by way of Protectorate or still looser control according to the degree of difference existing between the respective cultural advancement of the two peoples. When however there is a general cultural equality between two peoples, then the attempted dominance of one over the other, whether for the simple and ancient motive of territorial and economic gain or the more modern alleged motive of cultural improvement would doubtless be condemned.

Let us leave it to those who have formulated the doctrine of non-interference to work it out honestly, consistently, and without any false hypocrisy. What seems

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clear however is, that if in the future one nation interferes with another, such action will be sought to be justified on the grounds of the imperfect civilization of the latter. It is for this reason that Mr. Archer and others, endeavour to show that India is barbarous, unprogressive, mediaeval, superstitious, ignorant, unspiritual and so forth. Those who have hitherto allowed such charges to go against them without reply have shewn less perspicuity than those who have made them. In days, which though past are not old, superior force was considered sufficient justification for dominance and there was no need to seek any other. The times have changed ; and it is now considered necessary to satisfy, or at least allege to, the public conscience that political dominance or control is necessary in the interests of the servient people themselves. Upon this matter the spiritual, intellectual and social state ~~of~~ that people is of primary importance.

VII

The institution of a coloured people particularly of a politically servient one are very likely to appear inferior to those without understanding and freedom from prejudice. Though there is an answer, it is not unnatural to ask why, if a civilization is of value, it has not kept its people free ? Why, if it possesses an uplifting religious doctrine, does it not raise them from political subordination and the lack of the virile side of morality which such subordination implies ?

The extent to which from early times Indian civilization has been the subject of cultural attack and scolding abuse is a noteworthy fact. All Asiatic civilizations have had their share ; but my reading of this literature disposes me to the conclusion that India has suffered much more than any others. Even in 1830 (to go no further back) Sir Thomas Strange (" Hindu Law ")

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thought it necessary to say “It is the duty as well as the interest of Britain to foster those whom it has become the *unworthy fashion to undervalue and abuse*. It were at least a more magnanimous course *parcere subjectis*. Nor can it be a commendable one to irritate by *insulting* them.”

There are and have, been both in the present and past those who, without accepting the principles of Indian civilization, have striven (not always successfully) to be just to it. There has always been a smaller band of what Mr. Archer calls “Orientalizers” and “India-worshippers.” That great man and Orientalist Sir William Jones said : “It is impossible to read the Vedant or the many fine compositions in illustration of it, without believing that Pythagoras and Plato derived their sublime theories from the same fountain with the sages of India.” Though he did not live in a time when the political aspect of the cultural question was dominant, there is no reason to suppose that, if he had, his greatness of mind and judgment would have

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been affected by any considerations not strictly germane to a criticism of the great philosophy and religion which he thus praised. The celebrated French historian of Philosophy Victor Cousin wrote : " When we read with attention the poetical and philosophical monuments of the East, above all those of India, which are beginning to spread in Europe, we discover there many a truth and truths so profound, and which make such contrast with the meanness of the results at which European genius has sometimes stopped, that we are constrained to bend the knee before the philosophy of the East and to see in this cradle of the human race the native land of the highest philosophy." Freidrich Schlegel wrote : " Even the loftiest philosophy of the Europeans, the idealism of reason, as it is set forth by the Greek philosophers, appears in comparison with the *abundant light and vigour of Oriental idealism* like a feeble Promethean spark in the full blood of heavenly glory of the noon-day sun, faltering and feeble and ever ready to be extin-

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guished. *The Divine origin of man is continually inculcated to stimulate his efforts to return, to animate him in the struggle and incite him to consider a re-union and re-corporation with Divinity as the one primary object of every action and exertion.*" The lines I have italicised indicate "uplifting spiritual concepts" if mankind has ever known such. Upon Schopenhauer's well known saying that "in the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so *elevating* as the Upanishad. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death :" Professor Max Muller (by no means given to an uncritical admiration of things Indian and who has in several matters misjudged them) said : "If these words of Schopenhauer required any endorsement I should willingly give it as the result of my own experience during a long life devoted to the study of many philosophies and many religions."

These are the sayings of the greater men but the world is not made up of such. The bulk of criticism of Indian culture has been

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hostile and a good deal of it ignorant, abusive and unfair. A missionary author whom I have already cited has recently said: ('Christian Thought and Hindu Philosophy' by A. H. Bowman)—"It is not many years ago that the whole literature of Brahmanism was considered *a mass of intellectual and moral rubbish*. To-day the verdict of Western Scholars has completely changed. Indeed, the danger is lest now we may have gone to the other extreme." There is some exaggeration in this statement. I do not know of any Orientalist Scholars who are over-appreciative of India though there are an increasing number of laymen both English and others who are commencing in a just spirit to value its culture. Nevertheless the passage cited errs on the right side in so far as it indicates the unfavourable character of the general past verdict of the Western world. The change is by no means so complete, as the reverend author supposes. Moreover, political reasons have in recent years accentuated the cultural attack. Those

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who have read the previous sections will have understood the reasons.

Here two facts may be noted. The first is that there must be something peculiar in Indian civilization which is the cause of this animosity : and the second is the proof such attacks afford of the living force of this civilization. No one now goes into moral hysterics over the absurdities or iniquities of Phoenician, Carthaginian or Babylonian civilization. They are dead and gone but India lives. Up to now India has presented itself as one of the "immortal" peoples, to use the word of (I think) some French writer whose name I forget. Suffering racial and social division, politically disrupted, with a great variety of languages and scripts, governed for centuries by the strangers, She has yet held together so that we can still speak of "India." This I think is due primarily to certain religious and philosophical concepts held in common by Her people—and as regards "Hinduism" in its technical sense

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—the wonderful organization called Varnâ-shrama dharma.

An English author has spoken of that “ hideous blot India ” : a criticism which at least marks it as distinct from the rest of the “ unblotted ” world. That distinguished thinker Professor Lowes-Dickinson, in an essay which seeks with justice to define the character of Indian civilization, profoundly remarks that it is so unique that the contrast is not so much between East and West as between India and the rest of the world. Thus India stands for something which distinguishes it from all other peoples, and so she calls Herself a Karma bhûmi as opposed to the Bhoga bhûmi of all other peoples. For this She has been wonderfully preserved until to-day. Even now (and in this consists one cause of the extraordinary interest which India arouses) we can see the life of thousands of years ago. Standing on the Ghats at Benares or by any village well we are transported into the beautiful antique world. One of the greatest (amongst several) services which

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England has rendered India consists in this—that She has not only aroused this country to new life, but She has during such process also largely helped to preserve Her archaic customs and ancient thought until to-day. For social and religious institutions are the body in which the spirit of ancient ideals is conserved. India is now about to be drawn into the world-vortex, wherein She must herself struggle to preserve herself. Until now England has been a protection and a shield. For had India been drawn into that vortex before commencing to recover her strength, She was like to have altogether disappeared.

The author, whom I have just cited, finds the uniqueness of India to consist in Her religion of eternity and in this he is right; though, as I show later, Indian doctrine is not, when rightly understood, one-sided but has a “time-religion” also. One form of Vedânta—that of the Shâkta—effects one of the most complete syntheses of the life of the world and of spirit that I know. It is perhaps a misunderstanding

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on this point which may account, in part, for the repulsion which many Westerns feel towards Indian religion and philosophy. The missionary author whom I have cited quotes Dr. Matheson as saying :—“ It is not too much to say that the mind of the West with all its undoubted impulses towards the progress of humanity has never exhibited such an intense amount of intellectual force as is to be found in the religious speculations of India.....These have been the cradle of all Western speculations, and wherever the European mind has risen into heights of philosophy, it has done so because the Brahman was the pioneer. There is no intellectual problem in the West which had not its earlier discussion in the East, and there is no *modern solution* of that problem *which will not be found anticipated in the East.*” Upon this the author who makes the citation observes “ We may think this language too strong but we shall never again depreciate the intellectual value, the philosophic subtleties, the religious purpose of the sacred books of the East.”

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This prophecy has not proved correct.. Mr. Archer's and other criticisms belie it. On the whole, however, it rightly indicates the general tendency where political motives do not intervene. In the Administration Report of the United Provinces (1913—1914) there is the following happy and yet unhappy statement: "It is satisfactory to note that the vernacular Christian literature has *almost* freed itself from vituperation and abuse of other religions." Progress has also been made in a higher class of literature towards a better understanding of Indian culture. It is being found that some of its philosophic teachings harmonise with the conclusions and generally accepted hypotheses of modern Western natural science and psychology. Again, what is called Occultism has made great strides in recent years.. Even so-called "scientific" men have been constrained to accept against their will occult phenomena which have for ages been known and recognised in this country. The doctrine of the Vedânta is being:

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widely spread. When Western thought has worked independently it has been in the same direction. A recent philosophical work ('Religion and Reality'—J. H. Tuckwell) rightly says "In our main conclusion we have long ago been anticipated by the religious philosophy of India. In the West our philosophy has been surely but slowly moving to the same inevitable monistic goal. In Professor Ladd of Harvard we have a notable Western thinker who by a process of careful and consistent reasoning, concrete in character, has also arrived at the conclusion that the ultimate Reality must be conceived of as an Absolute Self of which we are finite forms or appearances. But it is the crowning glory of the Vedānta that it so long ago announced, re-iterated and emphasized this deep truth in a manner that does not permit us for a moment to forget it or explain it away. This great stroke of identity, this discernment of the ultimate unity of all things in Brahman or the One Absolute Self seems to us to

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constitute the masterpiece and highest achievement of India's wonderful metaphysical and religious genius to which the West has yet to pay the full tribute which is its due."

But this increase in appreciation of India's culture rouses to stronger effort those who are opposed to it. From the religious side it is natural enough that Hinduism should still encounter opposition from other forms of religion. Philosophers will also continue their age-long debate. Lately, however, a political motive has worked strongly at the back of hostile criticism both in this specific class of literature and in the Press. The motive is to show that, notwithstanding claims and appreciations to the contrary, India is unqualified for the political advancement which (rightly or wrongly) She seeks. We find therein such arguments as that the doctrine of Karma, Reincarnation, Pessimism, Absolutism and so forth are such sapping influences on moral and intellectual character as to render this country unfit for

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self-governance. Such critics are, as likely as not, without interest in such philosophical questions considered in themselves. Most would be hard put to define accurately for instance what Karma is. Others who know more have written erroneously of it. But it is obvious that if it can be established that India on this and other accounts is not civilized but barbarous, that is an argument against Her capacity for political autonomy. If Her face can be made ugly, religiously, morally, intellectually and socially and in every other way, then the British people will not like the look of it. In the meanwhile do not let them be deluded by the idea that She has real civilized worth. She is barbarous. If other Western critics, judging the matter without political bias, have approved any form of Indian culture, steps must be taken to discredit them and to show they are all wrong or interested. They are either, as the "Times" charges, seeking a "cheap popularity" or as Mr. Archer says they are Orientalists (how many?) making the most

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of a subject which, meagre in worth though it be, has cost them years of study ; or they are “Theosophists” or gullible, or cranks and so forth. It is necessary in particular to deny the alleged spiritual character of Indian civilization. It would never do to admit this. For spirituality is honoured of all men and where it truly exists, there are other excellences. For this reason too “The Times” approves Mr. Archer’s work as establishing that Indian culture does not provide “anywhere any great moral or spiritual concept capable of *uplifting a nation.*” It follows, of course, that others must provide these concepts and take in charge the business of “uplift.” Similarly, the leader-writer of an Anglo-Indian Calcutta Daily, after drawing attention to the fact that a British Statesman to whom he referred had the “Christian outlook on politics,” stated that in India “the Tantric view of life and its problems still insidiously survives,” as an argument against political change. What the writer meant I cannot say unless it be that as the word

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‘Tantra’ makes many people shudder, the association of the word with Indian political claims would give them a sinister colour. Similarly a correspondent in the same Journal, after stating that to grant self-government to India would be to subject the Englishman to the control of races “who are not his peers in the sense of their having attained to the same plane of civilization and culture” and denying that the Indians are “a very highly civilized people” says:—“Is it sound and far seeing statesmanship to subordinate to the rule of Tantric worshippers “races who profess a religion (to wit, Christianity) “which exterminated the cults of Isis, Mithra, Astarte, the Eleusinian and other mysteries of classical times.” Whether such writers are politically right I do not here discuss. I am only concerned with the motive of their criticisms so far as it affects their value. They continually talk of their superior civilization: and it may be that in some matters it is superior. But what as regards others? Mr. Archer belongs to this class.

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Claims have been made for the essentially spiritual character of the Indian mind. Mr. Archer first says "The glory which is claimed for India by serious Western thinkers—in words re-echoed a thousand-fold by Indians themselves—is that of a high spirituality, an unique genius for grasping and expounding the realities behind the phenomenal world and the innermost meanings of life." But it is just on this point that Mr. Archer is most markedly dissentient. For he says "It is precisely on the religious side that the character of the Indian people, as I read it, is conspicuously defective." "India's real distinction lies, not in evolving, but in killing, the germs of sane and virile spirituality." "The Indian people have always gravitated towards the lower rather than the higher element in religion ; towards the form rather than the substance ; towards the letter rather than the spirit. That is why I hold it the very acme of paradox to claim for them an exalted spirituality." Only a " few fanatics " would

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say that India "has evolved a noble pure progressive religion in intimate relation with high racial and individual morality." Higher Hinduism, he says, is so contaminated by the lower that "except in small reforming sects" it can be scarcely said to exist. By Higher Hinduism he evidently understands Theistic movements similar to, and influenced by, Christianity; a common notion of English writers who naturally and with greater ease understand these movements than orthodox Hinduism. The latter he finds is based on an "enervating" metaphysic and certain false notions of Pessimism, Asceticism, Karma and Reincarnation. In particular it preaches "the unreality of the world, detachment from terrestrial interests, the unimportance of the life of the moment compared with the endless chain of past and future existence: all doctrines which lead to the enfeeblement of volitional individuality." "It presents speculation in the guise of dogma." Its cosmology, physiology, psychology are found to consist of "baseless classifications

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and ingenious guesses.” But to mistake groping for seeing, guessing for knowing—that is the very unspiritual habit into which India has fallen.” The Indian people have not manifested an “unique religio-philosophic genius.” On the contrary “the genius which the Indian people, from the Brahmin caste downwards, has displayed to great perfection is a genius for obfuscating reason and formalizing, materializing, degrading religion.” “Great thinkers she may have possessed but she has not extracted from their thoughts a rational, ennobling, or even a morally helpful religion.”

It is somewhat of a surprise to learn from this book that it is thought to be part of the business of Census Officers to pass judgments on the religions of this country ; for Hinduism is said in the (1901) Census of India (cited as an authority by Mr. Archer) to be “Animism more or less tempered by philosophy” or more briefly “ Magic tempered by metaphysics.” These smart sayings are, however, Mr. Archer thinks too favourable ; for “to my thinking the animism

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and the magic are much more palpable than the transformation and tempering.” “The ‘spirituality’ manifested in the lower Hinduism is that to which anthropologists have given the name of ‘Animism’.” “Hinduism as a popular religion consists in the cult of a monstrous folk lore oppressing and paralysing the imagination.” It is “the lowest professed and practised by any people that purports to have arisen above savagery. Beside it the devotion of the Russian or Spanish peasant is rational and enlightened.” “Hinduism is the character of the people and it indicates a melancholy proclivity towards whatever is monstrous and unwholesome.” It is not a “morally helpful religion.” If nevertheless he finds in the Hindu writings many admirable ethical doctrines “it is only because Hindu philosophy is after all too human to be logical.” “Hinduism though it has much talked of righteousness has never claimed moral teaching as one of its functions.” It is true he says that “there are vices and stupidities among the nations of the West

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from which the Hindu is comparatively free ” but even this is not to be counted to his credit—the reason being that it is “ rather because they do not come his way than because he rises superior to them.”

As for metaphysics which, as is well known, is associated with the Hindu religion, it is true that India “ has displayed an unequalled diligence in thinking about the unthinkable ; that being an exercise agreeably compatible with physical immobility and living upon the alms of the faithful.” Its philosophy “ denies all value to life ” and has led the people “ not towards the study of nature but away from it.” It is an effect of climatic influences. “ Only in a hot country is it possible for a human being to spend months, years, or even a lifetime in sitting cross-legged and contemplating his own navel. Only in a hot country could the opinion arise that this was the best way of ascertaining the truth as to the nature and constitution of the universe.” Its metaphysic is “ enervating ” expelling all volitional individuality.

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But any kind of metaphysic even the best is “a man-made illusion.” It is quite a mistake to suppose that “familiarity with metaphysical conceptions—perhaps even the capacity of arguing with some subtlety a metaphysical point, is necessarily a proof of great mental capacity.” He is sceptical “of the value of thought in a region where there is no possible test of values.” Such speculations “are all efforts to know the unknowable and think about the unthinkable.” It is conceded on the other hand that India can claim priority of date in some of her philosophical speculations and that India may have had great and subtle thinkers. The appraisement of India’s contribution to metaphysics he would leave to the experts; whilst he in fact forestalls them with his own criticisms.

In short the spiritual genius of the Indian people everywhere expresses itself in forms “which not only the Western world but China and Japan have for ages outgrown.” “The Western mind has decisively out-

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grown the Eastern : has embraced a wider range of experience and touched greater depths and—I do not hesitate to say—deeper depths of thought.” “The ordinary daily practices of the (Indian) cult are sufficient to place it beyond the pale of civilisation.” “Wherever you turn you meet repulsive performances of piety.” Hinduism is “anti-rational.” “It is in short the great anachronism of the modern world.” “Hinduism has not been cleansed for thirty centuries.” “It is true that corruptions have crept into other religions which have relapsed into something like primitive fetishism, and that attempts at filtration have been only partially successful.” But “Hinduism on the other hand is a wholly unfiltered religion—a paganism which has resolutely declined filtration. It is this tendency towards pollution rather than purification that assigns it its place— incomparably the lowest—in the scale of world religions. Until Hinduism has somehow got itself filtered, India cannot reasonably claim fellowship on terms of

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equality with the civilised nations of the earth."

Mr. Archer is not alone in this class of criticisms. He has the countenance of some learned Orientalists. Dr. A. E. Gough described the Upanishads as "the work of a rude age, a deteriorated race and a *barbarous* unprogressive community." "It is no more spiritual than the old observance of prescriptive *sacra*." "There is little" as he says "that is spiritual in all this." "In treating of Indian Philosophy a writer has to deal with *thoughts of a lower order than the thoughts of the every day life of Europe*. The great difficulty lies in this, that a *low order of ideas* has to be expressed in a high order of terms, and that the English words suggest a wealth of analysis and association altogether foreign to the thoughts that are to be reproduced. The effort is nothing less than an endeavour to revert to a ruder type of mental culture and to become for the time being *barbarous*." So when the sage uttered his wonderful generalization "That thou art" he gave

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expression to a thought lower than the thoughts of the every day life of any Western Dick, Tom or Harry. Another English Professor went a step further when he told a young Indian friend of mine upon his return to India : "Not to waste his time over Indian religion or metaphysics *for there was nothing in them.*" If Dr. Gough found that that the former contained thoughts of a "lower order," the other man of learning deemed them to be of no value at all. If I remember rightly, my friend was counselled to seek the satisfaction of his soul's needs in the Science (doubtless useful in its way) of Numismatics.

With such views among some orientalists it is not surprising that others with less opportunity for knowledge go astray. A well known English traveller in Africa described the Hindu religion as "a mixture of nightmare nonsense and time-wasting rubbish fulfilling no useful purpose whatever; only adding to the general burden of existence borne by Humanity in its struggle

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for existence." Another tourist applying the *£. s. d.* test wrote : " For an Englishman to get a plain statement of what Brahmanism really means is far from easy. The only wonder is that people *who have to live on nine pence a week*, who marry when they are ten years old, are prevented by caste life from rising out of what is often, if not always, a degraded state *have any religion at all.*" The journalist, Mr. Harold Begbie, in a work (" the Light of Asia ") published by the " Christian Literature Society for India " speaks of Hinduism (to summarise a longer criticism) as " a weltering chaos of terror, darkness, and uncertainty. It is a religion without the apprehension of a moral evolution, without definite commandments, without a religious sanction in the sphere of morals, without a moral code, without a God, except a Being which is a mixture of Bacchus, Don Juan and Dick Turpin. It is the most material and childishly superstitious animalism that ever masqueraded as idealism : not another path to God but a pit of abomination as far set from God as

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the mind of man can go ; staggering the brain of a rational man ; filling his mind with wild contempt for his species and which has only endured because it has failed." The publishers of this "Christian Literature" are evidently no believers in the more modern so-called "sympathetic treatment" of Indian culture : which, to use the words of one of its exponents, while finding something precious in Indian civilization finds also much that is false and unwholesome. I have never but once come across offensive criticism written of Christianity by a Hindu ; and that was the case of a man who published a short lived "comic" paper in Calcutta modelled on a French anticlerical journal, the illustrations of which he seemed to have borrowed. "Christian Literature," of this kind serves at least the purpose of contrasting this form of Christian aggression with the doctrine of the Vedânta and Gîta that all religions should be respected.

To return to Mr. Archer.

As regards Art he is of opinion that

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India has not been lacking in talent and abounds in noteworthy works; but he is strongly opposed to the view that it is a supreme expression of the spirit of man, superior or even equal to European art. He desires to show the "anti-rational bases of the unqualified and unmeasured eulogies of the Indian genius." India "is a hotbed of imagination." "Hindu (as distinct from Mahomedan) art habitually tends to extravagance and excess." If for instance one compares the Javanese Boro-Buder sculptures with the reliefs and friezes at Mamallapuram and Badami, "the difference almost amounts to that between fine art and barbarism." The broad shoulders and thin waist of the typical Indian heroic figure "are due to the fact that the ideal of strength was based on the proportions of the lion or tiger. Such an ideal is very naturally formed by a people in a state of semi-savagery and adherence to it might not unfairly be interpreted as showing that the semi-savage state has not been far outgrown." India, it is said, thus "goes

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to the jungle for its ideas instead of to the gymnasium and the council hall ;" which I may add in modern days does not always provide models of masculine beauty. "There is more spirituality in (for example) the ideal head of Homer, seamed by suffering and furrowed by thought than in the whole pantheon of Buddhist or Hindu sculpture." Hindu sculpture "carries to excess all the faults noted in the Amaravati relief and adds to them the undesirable characteristic of constantly dealing in grotesque monstrosities." "Within the temples it is just the same colossal contorted forms looming menacingly through the gloom, everywhere a riot of violent, often sensual, imagery, nowhere one touch of nature or one point of rest " except in the "pot bellied Falstaff of Hinduism" Ganesha. "The monster gods of India are originally ogres; figures in which cowering savages embodied their conception of the destructive powers of nature. Kâlî is set "in a ravening attitude like that of a barn-storming player of the good old days tearing a passion to

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tatters." "Sophisticate them as you please the monster gods of India are survivals from a low stage of spiritual development."

Mr. Archer then passes to the Hindu epic and drama in which "we seem to see the over-strained over-elaborated over-crowded sculptures and in viewing the sculptures we seem to hear the vast labyrinthine multitudinous epics." "The Indian imagination suffers from habitual and ancestral over-fatigue." "There is an insensitiveness to normal and wholesome stimulation." "The epics keep the Indian mind stagnant." "The Greek epics would make ten times better Bibles than the huge accumulations of sacerdotalised folk-lore from which the Indian populace derive their notions of the heroic and divine." Then he objects to the stories of asceticism, the generation stories, the spectacular, sensational and passionate, the stories of magic and so on. Similar ideas, he says, doubtless prevail elsewhere but not so extravagantly. The character is dehumanized such as the saintly Râma who is too

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saintly and the long suffering Sítá whose heroism is “too often like that of Alkestis and Griselda excessive to the verge of immorality.”

Then there is the “self-defeating, the enervating, the exhausting extravagance of hyperbole, the wildest monstrosities and folk-lore incapable of awakening any feeling, other than scientific, in a civilized person or person aspiring to civilisation.”

“The Mahâbhârata is in no way behind the Râmâyana in crudity and extravagance :”

“It is in many respects the more barbarous of the two.” There are “limitless insensate conceptions of heroism, expressing itself in terms of frenzied ferocity,” “contortions, convulsions” “of a turbid flood of primitive and barbarious legendry.” The passion for hyperbole is blended with an “amazing and amusing euphemism.”

It is somewhat of a relief to pass with the author to the Drama where he says the imagination can move healthily and at ease instead of “passing through epilepsy to paralysis.” Yet still “the Hindu drama

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remains a curiously undeveloped art form ; " meagre as compared with the literature of the West or Far East. It is the drama of passivity where the characters are the passive puppets of supernatural wire-pulling." " A people which thus leaves out of its drama the element of will, probably does so because the element of will plays no efficient part in its life."

As for architecture no doubt the giant temples of the south are marvels of massive construction and have often a sort of titanic impressiveness. But they look as if they had been built by demon Râkshasas. " Of unity, clarity, nobility of design they show no trace." " It is a disease of gigantesque barbarism." When we pass further north we still find the same ponderousness the same absence of anything like lightness and grace. " They are less barbarous perhaps than the Gopuras of the south but scarcely more beautiful. There is a " self-defeating wastefulness in Hindu architecture " which provides " incredible marvels of insensate over-elaboration." Mahomed-

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anism however begets things of beauty. Mr. Archer who does not seem to admire anything except his own rationalistic civilisation (whatever it be) says "I am no admirer of Islam ; but the glory of its architecture is a patent, palpable fact which proves what India can do when it wakes from the hallucinations of Yoga and the multitudinous nightmares of its indigenous cults."

Indian painting is then brought up for judgment. Apart from the Ajanta frescoes it is said to be a late and post-Mahommedan development. But just as "monstrous" is the epithet for Hindu sculpture, "miniature" is a reproach against painting. It is allowed that there is wonderful illuminative richness, extraordinary draughtsmanship, great beauty of decorative detail (remarkable gifts on the part of a barbarous people) but, as one might expect, there is a drawback to all this in the shape of "a total inability to escape from a laborious convention, to attain freedom and breadth

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of design, to suggest to the imagination anything more than is presented to the eye." There is a "certain hard limited cleverness." "Though they may be great by Indian standards by world standards they remain small." "The arrest of development in Indian art seems to be closely paralleled by the arrest of development in Indian civilization." "There is however no question that India has splendid artistic capacities" but what she wants is restraint; for a self-satisfaction was from the first her besetting sin." In other countries artistic movements germinate, ripen, culminate and decay but in the extraordinary climate of India "they do not ripen but are checked before they have even approached maturity." Mr. Archer once more writes foolishness about "Reality." Others "have fallen under India's illusion that art inspired by transcendental truth must be the greatest art in the world." But Indian truth if it is true is said to be destructive of art "because it is only in so far as India ignores her own

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truth and accepts provisionally the real existence of the visible universe that she possesses any art at all." He concludes with the "radical inferiority of Indian art." "Europe even in virtue of its works of the second and third order is incomparably richer than India in products of artistic genius." Certainly Abanindranath Tagore's "Buddha as mendicant" has great nobility of character "but the type is European." We must, it is said, attribute all this inferiority to the "general undervaluing in religion and philosophy of will and endeavour." "Life is conceived as a shoreless expanse in which generations rise and fall as helplessly and purposelessly as waves in mid-ocean. The individual life is everywhere dwarfed and depreciated." "India has contributed only one great character Gautama Buddha to the world's pantheon;" but this limited concession is rendered nought by the sceptical remark "and he perhaps never existed." "If a claim be put in for Asoka it may possibly be allowed (Mr. Archer

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relents) but then the old mood surges up—“but after all how featureless he is!”

Then Mr. Archer states that European history, literature, and Art swarms above everything with great characters but “when we have named the Buddha and Akbar” (who it may be noted was so kindly disposed to the Hinduism which to Mr. Archer is so great an offence) “we have exhausted the supreme personalities whom India has given to history.” Where are the Indian Charlemagnes, Alfreds, Columbus, Luther, Cromwell Richelieu and Napoleon? Where he again asks are the fictitious characters Hamlet, Falstaff, Shylock, Lear, Quixote, Alcestis, Tartuffe, Don Juan, and Mephistopheles? Where are the Raphaels, Titians and others? “At whatever point we institute a comparison we find India deficient in the record, at any rate, of strong, energetic, dominant personality.” “There is throughout a depression of will and energy.”

Music is then bid to appear and though Mr. Archer says “in the absence of technical

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knowledge I can at best speak vaguely " he cannot resist a depreciative criticism on this point also for fear apparently that he might not be complete. Mr. Archer is decidedly " Pûrna " on his theme. " In music it seems to me we have the irrefragable proof that the Western mind has decisively outgrown the Eastern." " The delicate tinklings of Indian melody cannot be compared with the titanic harmonies of Handel and Haydn, Beethoven and Wagner."

Mr. Archer himself overcome by his excess of depreciation winds up " I unfeignedly regret in conclusion the controversial and even depreciatory tone of this Chapter." But why ? If the facts be as stated, why regret the statement of them, if a statement be at all considered necessary. It seems however that India's art strangely enough " contributed to the spell she cast upon me." India must indeed be a Râkshasî. But Mr. Archer resists this spell because he has been aroused by the claims made for India that in art, as in other things, India is supreme,

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and sanity is essential for India's salvation ; and so he has thus written to cure Her of Her pride.

Mr. Archer then proceeds to deal with "the insensate racial vanity and the bacillus of arrogance," as displayed in social institutions, "the inhuman snobbery" of caste (so unlike the class snobbery and injustice to the poor of the west); the priesthood, (existing in Europe also), marriage (as to which "our habits are not like those of India mere crystallizations of barbarism") Sati, infanticide, (so rare to-day that their mention is evidence of an untempered desire to defame) widow-remarriage, sea voyage, and the like. As for "progress," he says, that "the country in its inmost heart resents and despises it." The conclusion is stated by Mr. Archer in connection with the caste question in the following query :—are the people who adhere to such customs justified in claiming an independent and equal place among the nations of the world ?

I have neither the space nor time to meet

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in detail all these criticisms. Indian culture cannot be disposed of, as Mr. Archer has done, in a few summary Chapters. As regards Indian Art I refer the reader to three writers on the subject who have understood it—Mr. Havell, Dr. Coomaraswamy, and Srijut O. C. Gangooly. There is much that is absurd in Mr. Archer's criticisms but some of it is not without ground; though it is weakened by his excessive language and generalizations. In some matters of taste I not unnaturally, being a Western as he is, prefer what is our own. The glories of the great Gothic Cathedrals, the wondrous expressions of Christian worship in the ages of faith and the noble simplicity of Greek architecture appeal to me more than any Hindu Temple. With him again I think that Indian music cannot be compared with, say, the heroic grandeur and sensuous magic of Wagner. But what of that? Naturally what is our own in literature or art and culture generally appeals to us best. This can be admitted without unnecessary or excessive

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and let me add offensive, depreciation of the culture of others. These comparisons in matter of taste seem to serve no useful purpose. Let each mind feed upon what it likes best ; and do not let overselves intrude on the peace of its enjoyment. I will therefore in the succeeding sections mainly deal shortly with some of the fundamental concepts of Indian religion and metaphysic which are the root of, and are expressed in, other forms of Indian civilization.

Meanwhile it may be pointed out that Mr. Archer refutes himself on all points. He is not a logical thinker and has evidently been carried away by his feelings. So after this plethora of hostile criticism we come across the following passage :— “There are in Calcutta, Bombay and elsewhere a certain number of emancipated and highly cultivated families with whom social intercourse is a privilege and a pleasure. The difficulty in their case is that *one is apt to feel like a semi-barbarian upon an abode of ancient, fine spun aristocratic culture.*” “Awe” he adds “ is perhaps

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not quite the feeling with which these grave Orientals regard *our Western crudities*." Just so. Even Mr. Archer feels himself a semi-barbarian in the presence of high examples of Indian culture. For it is Indian culture of which he speaks. He would not of course feel a semi-barbarian in the presence of his own. We then ask where does this *ancient* fine spun aristocratic culture come from ? Is it not an inheritance from the Indian past the glories of which Mr. Archer denies. Is it possible, for what is essentially an unspiritual barbarism, to produce results which make even Mr. Archer abashed ? And if, as he says, many thousands have in the past arisen and are now arising from Barbarism and have become so civilized as to make him feel a semi-barbarian, how did they do it ? A worthless tree cannot bear good fruit. Why not then say that the tree is a good one and if to-day its fruit is not always what one might expect, it is because the tree is suffering from disease, want of nourishment, or may be from the infirmity

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of age. In the latter case let us look
see if some young shoots are springing
from the base of its age-old and weathered
trunk.

VIII

In criticising Indian civilization there are two simple facts to be first remembered. India in the first place is no exception to the general rule that a country is made up of all manner of men. Secondly, although, as set out later, there are certain general features which we may call Indian, there are on the other hand a variety of beliefs and practices.

Whilst the differences alleged are not always such or as great as they seem, an historical survey of India shows that She has (as one might have supposed) produced all varieties of human character. India which is religious also produced (as an atheistic acquaintance of mine was greatly pleased to hear) the Chārvākas and Lokā-yatas; materialists and sensualists who denied the existence of God, reviled the Vedas and the priests as frauds and cheats; sought enjoyment only in life leaving at death "as many debts as

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possible." India which produced ascetic defamers of women in the style of the Christian Fathers also worked out a scientific scriptures of Eroticism—the Kâma Shâstra, wrote sensuously conceived literature, carved recondite obscenities on its temples, and painted similar scenes for the incitement of its passions, which it satisfied in many forms of sensual enjoyment both on this, and (as the Magician), the super-physical plane. The same India which in the person of the Sannyâsî fled from the world to the forest also glorified that world in sumptuous art. India was meditative and yet gave birth to men of action celebrated as warriors and statesmen, and a people who governed themselves practically and with success. Those who say that this country has never known Self-government do not themselves know their subject. As M. Barthelemy Saint Hilaire said ("L'Inde Anglaise") "In no country in the whole world has communal autonomy been so developed" ("Dans aucun pays du monde, l'autonomie communale n'a été poussée

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plus loin.") It was, as Professor Monier Williams said, Self-government in all its purity. This was the primitive communal organization of the village with its headman, Panchayet or Council and its local officers and servants. Well developed also were the relations and functions of the people (Prajâdharma) towards the King with his Councillors and of the King towards his people (Râjadharma). Some seem to think that because India had not the ballot-box and hustings and other paraphernalia of political Western life, it did not know what Self-Government is. There are also a class of political writers who repeat that India "likes to be ruled" meaning thereby autocratic government. Such also know nothing of the Hindu Spirit or History. The Hindu Kings were not autocrats. Their will was as much subject to the general Dharma as were the people. Whilst the people recognised the King, his duties and functions, the King did the same as regards the people. The Hindu Spirit politically displayed itself in

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a form which was worthy of its other great achievements. India has produced men successful in industry and commerce; though it is often forgotten or unknown that from the date of Greek and Roman civilization until about the close of the eighteenth century India was renowned for its artizanship and industries. "The wealth of Ormuz and of Ind" was proverbial. Pliny in fact complains of the drain of gold from Rome to India which furnished the former Imperial Capital with some of its splendours. English experts speaking of its unrivalled beauty and delicacy have described Indian cotton (to take an example) as "the finest the earth produces." Whilst ever famed for its deep introspection, India was also not without Her men of science with outward-directed mind ; limited necessarily as their achievements were if compared with those of our time. Mr. Archer is under the impression that the Hindus knowledge is obtained by a mechanical "pouring in" from the teacher to the disciple. This is, of course, not so.

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It seems absurd to have to say that the Hindu, like every one else, admits as a valid source of knowledge, perception (Pratyaksha), inference (Anumâna) and the like and has developed a logic of great subtlety and completeness. Their application to the positive sciences of the Hindus may be found in Professor Brajendra Nath Seal's work of that name. A short and useful summary of "Hindu Achievement in exact science" has recently been given by Professor Benoy Kumar Sircar. He makes a point to which I have also alluded elsewhere in another connection namely, that the difference between Asia and Europe in the matter of the so-called exact sciences dates from about three hundred years back which is the age of experimental and inductive science. It was during this period that the cultural superiority in this particular respect of the Modern West was established ; nor was that superiority great until much later when during the nineteenth century the application of steam to production and transportation effected the parting

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of the ways of East and West ushering in "Modernism" with its new world-politics, social institutions, science and philosophy, giving Eur-America its present alleged superiority over Asia. If, however, we compare the Indian contribution to exact positive and material culture with parallel contemporary developments amongst the Greeks, Greco-Roman, Saracen, Chinese and mediaeval Europeans the Hindus can make at least an equal and, in some respects, a superior claim to that made by these peoples in respect of scientific culture. In fact, the trend of recent scholarship is towards establishing the Hindu source of Greek science. Much of the credit also given to the Saracen is really due to the Hindus from whom they derived their Mathematics, Chemistry, and Medicine. The Hindus, however, may have been indebted to the Greeks in some cases as is admitted in respect of Astronomy by Varāhamihira. Professor Sircar observes that the pure Mathematics of the Hindus was on the whole not only in advance of

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some of the Greeks, but anticipated European discoveries of the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Centuries. As Hankel in his history of Mathematics says "It is remarkable to what extent Indian Mathematics enters into the Science of our time." Dr. Morgan says "Indian Arithmetic is that which we now use." The Hindus originated the numerals, wrongly known as Arabic because the Europeans got them from their Saracen teachers, and the decimal system of notation known to Aryabhatta as early as the Fifth Century. Algebra is a Hindu Science despite its Arabic name; for as Cajori says the Indians were "the real inventors of Algebra." Colebrooke has analysed the points in which Hindu Algebra was favourably distinguished from that of the Greeks who, as Cajori thinks, got through Diophantus their Algebraic knowledge from India. Geometry was studied by the Hindus from the date of Sulvasûtras of Baudhâyana and Apastamba to Bhâskara in the 12th Century and beyond. In some points the Hindus anticipated

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Modern Trigonometry devising the Sines (an Arabic corruption of the Sanskrit Shinjini) and Versed Sines unknown to the Greeks, who calculated by the help of the Chords. Professor Seal says that Vâchaspati anticipated in a rudimentary manner the foundations of solid (co-ordinate) Geometry. Bhâskarâchâryya (1114) anticipated Newton by five hundred years in the discovery of the principle of the differential Calculus and its application to Astronomical problems and computations. In Kinetics, the Hindus analysed the concept of motion, gravity (ascribed to the attraction of the Earth), acceleration, the law of motion and the accelerated motion of falling bodies.

Professor Sircar says that whilst the Hindus may have failed like other races to discover fundamental laws planetary, inorganic and organic if judged by the generalizations of to-day, yet "Some of their investigations were solid achievements in positive knowledge as in *Materia Medica*, *Therapeutics*, *Anatomy*, *Embryology*, *Metallurgy*, *Chemistry*, *Physics*, and des-

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criptive Zoology. And in these also, generally speaking, Hindu enquires were not less, if not more, definite, exact and fruitful than the Greeks and Mediaeval Europeans." "The Hindu intellect has thus," he rightly says, "independently appreciated the dignity of objective facts, devised the methods of observation and experiment, elaborated the machinery of logical analysis and true investigation, attacked the external universe as a system of secrets to be unravelled, and has wrung out of nature the knowledge which constitutes the foundations of Science." It is quite an error to suppose that the Hindus have had no achievements beyond those in Metaphysics and Religion (in which they are generally admitted to have been pre-eminent): and still more so to suppose with Mr. Archer that they have spent the long ages of their history "in gazing upon their navel."

India in short has produced men and women of great virtue and distinction, together with criminals, sinners and the

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ordinary men who everywhere make up the bulk of humanity. Those therefore who write against or in praise of India should do so with exactness, discrimination, and the latter with avoidance of mere puffing general statements. Thus shortly before I had written this I came across the following passage "To a Hindu there is no past, present or future. He is always with his God and to him all the universe is always in God" and so on. From writing of this kind (and it is one of a class) one might suppose that every Hindu was thinking at all times of God. Such suggestions are absurd and make the Indian case laughable. The *general character of Indian civilization is spiritual* but this is not to say that every Hindu is that. In India as elsewhere the bulk of the people are ordinary men and women occupied with the usual thoughts and cares of all such the world over; the better amongst them reflecting in their way and according to their capacity the great thoughts of the highest of their race and thus gaining

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distinction amongst all the peoples. Some are as worldly minded and material (particularly to-day) as their corresponding class in Europe ; though (for lack of food and other causes) with generally less energy in their materialism than their Western brethren. Some few reach the highest spiritual experience of which the writer cited speaks. As an American humourist said, there is a good deal of human nature in man everywhere. As I walk along the streets of Calcutta a word I overhear perhaps more frequently than any other is "Paisa" or "Ha'pence" which the poor have little of. The middle-class, becoming increasingly indigent, are distraught with the thought of how to find ways and means to educate their sons and marry their daughters. There is indeed a past to which they regretfully look back, a present in which they suffer, and a future which some look forward to with hope and others with fear. Faith sustains some, in others, as in Europe, it is lost. The rich are too often concerned with themselves and the Govern-

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ment honours for which they hunt, and too little with the needs of their country. Some people are resigned, and some buoyed up by their religious faith ; and some are truly spiritual men whose lives and thoughts inspire and maintain their race. We must distinguish between India and the Indian : particularly at the present time when so many have fallen from the ideals of their race.

With all these varieties of men there are differences of belief and practice and degree of spiritual, moral, and intellectual development. When I hear people talk of Indian "Religion" I ask what form of it they mean. The question is disconcerting except to those who will approve nothing but what is their own, and who are out to blame everything. These will find fault with all forms. The so called "Pantheist" (a misnomer) is said to be given over to "cold abstractionism;" and the Theist to extravagant and misplaced devotion. Buddhism is "atheistic." Monism (advaita-vâda) carries tolerance so far as to be

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“ indifferent to the truth.” The sects have so little of it as to be “fanatical.” Indian architecture is demoniacally “titanic.” Indian Painting is too “miniaturist.” Râma is over saintly. Sîtâ “verges upon the immoral ;” and so on and so forth. At the back of the minds of such critics is the notion that nothing Indian is good because none of it is the same as their own.

Moreover the beliefs and institutions of a coloured people are apt to be regarded as inferior. Particularly is this so when that people is a politically servient one. The dominant race naturally asks itself why it is in fact in possession and control, and finds the cause in its superior civilization. It asks how can the civilization of the people which it rules be good ; seeing that they are subject ? How can its religion have the power of moral uplift when there is the lack of that virile side of morality which subordination implies ?

For the purpose of adverse generalizations India is treated as an unity. In this

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sense some speak of "Indian religion," "Indian philosophy" and "Indian morals" condemning each *en bloc*. Political and religious criticism on the other hand treats it as a mass of irreconcilable differences. Such will ask "What is Hinduism?" These imply that there is nothing to which that name can be given. It is not a people but a medley of various races, so it is said. If this be so, general criticisms cannot be passed. These ask how it is possible to link together "Godless" (Nirishvara) systems with Theistic theologies; the monist the qualified monist, and the dualist, the worshippers of the "Idol" and of the "Point of Light" (Jyotirbindu); rituals which in the past have sanctioned human, and to-day practise, animal sacrifice; and on the other hand believers in the sanctity of all life; worshippers of millions of "the gods" and Yogis seeking realization of the "Impersonal" Spirit; strict adherence to caste and sects which combat all caste and so forth. To many a foreigner therefore Indian beliefs and practices seem a

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“jungle” in which there is no path. There is a path. Meanwhile those who have not found it will save their credit if they avoid generalization on a subject which they do not understand. As I show later India does possess *a spiritual unity* for it possesses certain common fundamental beliefs. It also displays a wondrous variety of belief and practice suited to the capacities and temperaments of men. One of the most interesting enquiries is that which seeks the Theme of which these are the variations. These Themes will endure whilst their variations may either alter or pass away.

When in reply to criticism I speak of “India” I mean an Idea apprehended by us as an abstraction derived from present experience and study of the past, which in the Cosmic Mind is a particular type of Consciousness projected with all its variations by Its power or Shakti. The Shakti is both cause and effect and appearing as India is the Bhârata Shakti. Particular men or classes of men in this country embody in varying degrees and well or ill

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that Powerful Idea. Some even are unfaithful to it.

One of the mistakes which Mr. Archer and his class of critics make is to fail to distinguish between what is essential and vital in the Indian civilization ; and what is mere crust and alien (and even in some cases) evil, accretion. It has been well said that the tree of Indian Dharma is very ancient and it is not therefore surprising if in the course of the ages, some parasites have gathered on its trunk. If he and they were to confine their attention, at least in the first place, to these, they might produce some just criticism and offer some useful advice if either is called for. But Mr. Archer does just the reverse. He attacks the principles of Indian civilization (that is the little which he understands of them) and fails to distinguish between such principles and what are not their legitimate results, but abuses due to the weakness and evil of men. A powerful case of a different character might be made against India but he has not the knowledge

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to make it. Such a case would set forth the principles of Indian civilization in their purity and would thus show how far some of the Indian people had fallen from them in the present time. But he speaks of all abuses as if they were the legitimate application of principles evil in themselves. Those principles may be well founded or not. They differ fundamentally from the "modernism" of the West still in search of a sure basis on which to build itself. Men, it may be, will always differ in some of these matters. Difference of opinion, as the Radd-ul-Muhtar nobly says, is also the gift of God. But this is not necessarily to say that the principles are evil or barbarous. In fact who will be so rash as to say that India will not in the future be shown to be right. I speak of general principles. There is scarce a principle which the Western Civilization of the last century has preached which is not called in question and is not on trial to-day. Meanwhile in its past form it threatens to disappear with the smoke of its guns in

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a War for which all the West is ultimately, though in varying degrees, responsible, because all are responsible of the conditions under which it became possible.

Mr. Archer again lumps together indiscriminately matters which are contrary to the eternal Dharma ; matters unconnected with or unessential to it and often of comparatively recent development; and matters sanctioned by religion but which have in some degree been misunderstood or misapplied and have thus become an abuse. As instances of the first class we may cite his charges about female infanticide and Sati. There have been in the past cases of infanticide limited to particular parts of the country. But all such acts are condemned by Indian religion as by any other. Similar charges have been made against China and have formed a staple of missionary polemic. But as Professor Giles has shewn ("Chinese civilization") they are, except as instances of exceptional aberration, false. This kind of error dies hard when it serves some political or

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religious purpose. Even to-day there are still many who believe that Mahomedanism teaches that women have no souls. Sati, considered not as an act of truly voluntary devotion, but as a *practice* which compelled or drugged widows to immolate themselves was a cruel barbarism. But it is not sanctioned by the principles of Indian Dharma, however much some, at the time of its suppression, endeavoured, even by the falsification of texts, to show that it was. On the contrary the Mahânirvâna Tantra says that woman is the embodiment of the Divine Mother of the universe and that the destruction of women in the Sati rite leads to Hell. Moreover, though cases have very rarely occurred in modern times (I remember to have tried one myself) the rite is so much a thing of the past that to drag it up with infanticide to-day as a charge against India is unscrupulous.

On the second head we may refer, as he does, to the rule against sea voyage. This is a matter upon which Pandits differ and on what do they not? It is not an essential

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of Indian Dharma. On the contrary Ancient India had a large foreign trade and was in active intercourse through its merchants and sailors with the other countries of the world. The restrictions against sea voyage are of later date and were possibly prescribed like other rules with the intention of keeping India together and upholding its Dharma against corrupting alien influence. The rule is now being gradually abrogated. Again the so-called "shutting up" of women by Purdah has nothing to do with Hindu religion. It prevails in certain parts only of India and there in respect of the upper classes only. It was borrowed from the then Mahomedan Rulers, and is still liked by many of the ladies concerned who consider it to be a sign of respectability. In the same way the glamour which attends a dominant race produces amongst the imitative the "have a drink" and "so English" Indian; the type which bans "native dress" from his Club because it is "run on European lines" and brings up his children in "Indian Etons" to segregate

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gate them from the common run of Indian folk. One of these, a young man, informed an Indian friend of mine that he belonged to the "upper ten." All such imitative snobbery is alien to the spirit of this country. The education of woman according to modern notions has been neglected, as it indeed was in England until a quite late epoch when those ideas were first expressed. This is not to say that Indian women were, or are, lacking in culture any more than the Indian peasant is. The late Sir George Birdwood called the latter the most cultivated peasantry in the world. It is true that (to borrow the words of Mr. G. K. Chesterton concerning the Russian peasant whom the Indian peasant, in some respects, resembles) the latter knows little or nothing of modern science, commerce or machinery. He ploughs with an old plough is scantily clad, and has nothing but his faith, his fields, his great courage in facing a life as rude and hard as a subject of Alfred the Great but he is truly civilized in so far as he shares in, to the limit of his capacity,

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the great cultural traditions of his country. Indian history shows the names of distinguished women, and there were doubtless more than are known to fame. Education and literacy are not one and the same. No sensible person objects nowadays to the education of Indian women. The discussion rightly centres round the question what that education is to be. The views which prevail in India are rather like those which were generally entertained in England before the Suffrage Movement ; which still have some support there ; and which exist over the greater part of the European Continent. Personally I am in favour of giving the fullest opportunities to women, believing that nature is more to be trusted than man ; but it must be admitted that time has yet to show whether the ancient views based on the more rigid application of the physiological and psychological differences of men and women, or those of the "advanced" and free school will be found to be the more correct.

Instances of the third class of criticism

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are the rules relating to caste and marriage. As regards marriage there is a considerable literature which those who are interested may read. The learned differ upon the question whether Shastric authority supports a state of affairs of which they complain either as regards early marriage or widow remarriage. Until this matter is settled it is obviously premature to charge the true principles of Indian civilization with any abuses which have occurred. There have been abuses in connection with the first but the present tendency is to raise the age of marriage. If even then it seems early judged by recent Western views, according to which marriage is becoming more and more deferred, it should be remembered that under the English common law a girl could be married at twelve and was in fact in past times married early ; that girls attain puberty much earlier in this country than in the colder West ; and that the Hindu insists on marriage for all men and women, in the world both in the interests of the conservation of the race, and as a safe-

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guard from the sexual errors which abound amongst men, and are now commencing to affect women, in the West.

It is on the question of caste which is, according to orthodox views, a part of the Hindu Dharma that Mr. Archer, like most other Western critics, shows himself most angered. He says that in India "the most inhuman snobbery is a religious duty" and that caste "has corrupted Indian morality making insensate arrogance a religious and social duty." To speak of "snobbery" in connection with caste is to wholly misunderstand the matter. Sociology shows the existence of caste everywhere as rulers, warriors, merchants, agriculturists, servile population and so forth. These distinctions did not arise from snobbery but from the inherent needs of society and its organisation. Classes and (in a practical sense) castes exist in the West to-day. Many are of opinion that classes will always exist however much they may shift. Thus Professor Giddings the sociologist says "classes do not become blended as societies

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grow older; they become more sharply defined." He considers that "any social reform that hopes for the blending of classes is foredoomed to failure." The notion that "all men are equal" either in work, capacity or utility is unfounded. In modern Europe the sociological and economic order has not necessarily anything to do with religion at all. In fact country after country has separated Church and State. This was otherwise at the time of the great Catholic Synthesis, which the "Reformation," Renaissance, French Revolution, and other modern movements destroyed. In fact, modern Europe is without any settled foundation or aim. On all matters there is a chaotic difference of opinions some of which contain the seed of disruption which the great war will complete.

The main class divisions in modern Europe and America are between the rich or those comparatively so, and the poor or relatively poor. The man of wealth is the man of worth and power. Those to whom

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he is not so are either adherents of the old religious ideas, or modern reforming social movements. Of the time when he wrote Professor Giddings in his principles of Sociology says: "Upon a review of some parts of Europe and America, it may be inferred that in a community whose life is a tireless pursuit of materialistic ends—in which money-getting is the sum of success—there will be a sharp separation of the successful from the unsuccessful classes and an exploitation of the poor by the rich as wanton and as merciless as that of the weak by the strong in societies of military character. The laws will favour the prosperous, the mercenary spirit will corrupt judgment and religion alike." Whether the present revolution which Europe is undergoing will stay this process remains to be seen.

The ideal Indian scheme of social order is based on religious and philosophical principles which are also the practical ideals of daily life. The original Indian castes spoken of in the Scripture were, as is

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well known, four. To-day there are practically only two main castes the Brâhmana and the Shûdra; just as of the four Ashramas only two survive—the Grihastha and Avadhûta. It is in the last or Shûdra caste that the multitude of sub-castes have developed according to the nature of the occupations. The secular occupations of the castes are called Vrittis. Whilst each caste is expected to confine itself to its own prescribed calling, it is said that some latitude is allowable according to necessity in the case of the three higher castes, which however, if too freely availed of (as we see to-day in the case of Brâhmanas in non-Brâhmana occupations), results in spiritual deterioration. Confusion generally exists in the minds of Western writers on the subject of the castes and those "untouchables" outside all castes called Panchama and Pariah. The question of "untouchability" (Asprishya) must be distinguished from that of caste. The Pariah is regarded as unclean and in fact his habits are generally so. For this reason (that is for-

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fear of pollution) he is not allowed to use the water wells of the castes. Nevertheless the neglect of the Panchamas has been inhumane; a fact which has led to their conversion to Christianity in the hope of better social treatment. If their surroundings are unsanitary they should be taught and helped to put this right. There is a strong movement to remedy these evils even amongst those who adhere to the caste system as between themselves. The two matters of untouchability in connection with the Panchamas and of the castes should therefore be distinguished.

The two essentials of caste are the prohibitions against inter-marriage and eating in common. As regards the latter, Hindus do not attach so much importance to this form of social intercourse as do Europeans and particularly the English. It is quite possible to be on friendly terms with a man and to hold him in high esteem without eating with him: and in fact, subject to the two prohibitions stated, the castes mix with one another which is some

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times not the case with the European classes. To quote the words of an educated and distinguished negro the late Mr. Booker Washington " In all things which are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one in the hand in all things essential to mutual progress." Nor where as in India there is a rule which is kept does it involve any humiliation. Even in England the "gentleman" (a term losing its social distinction) and his tradesman, and still less his labourer, do not meet at table. Again in England, and still more so on the continent, interclass marriages do not generally take place. The substantial distinction is that in the West class is theoretically flexible, though in fact the rise from one class to another only takes place in exceptional instances. In India caste is inflexible whatever it may have been in the past, in which some think it was not so, as evidenced by the cases of Drona and Vishvamitra. In India again the rule relating to inter-marriage and inter-dining is kept rigidly by those who

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observe the caste system. In the West a man may dine with his "inferiors" at the risk of a charge of eccentricity and of giving offence to those of the same station if he asks them to do what he does. A man who thus regularly associated with his "inferiors" would probably find that his own class refused his invitations. In the same way there is a liberty to "marry beneath one" but those who do so may "be cut off with a shilling" and socially "boycotted" unless they happen to possess that open sesame which is wealth. For to the God of Money many make the fullest obeisance. It comes therefore to this that in India we see an ancient system logically and inflexibly applied. In Europe change is theoretically admitted and in some cases takes place in fact. As I write these lines I read that provisions have been recently published in South Africa precluding all coloured persons, Negro or otherwise, from travelling on the railway in compartments reserved for white men or in mail or other notified trains; and marriage between

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white women and Negroes. Those who think that the reasons which prompt this legislation are sound cannot without inconsistency condemn the restrictions imposed as regards the relation of castes, and as between the castes and the pariahs. What is the difference in principle between a rule prohibiting a Negro from marriage with a white woman or association with white men when travelling (custom excluding relations in other cases) and a rule prohibiting association and marriage between, say, a high Brâhmana and a Pariah and his women. In the same way those Indians who protest against distinctions being made against themselves should remember that their caste system assumes the same principle on which distinctions are based.

I am not here concerned to show which of these views is correct but to point out certain common misconceptions and the rational basis on which the rule of caste rests. In this connection an Indian writer ("Hindu Message") has acutely pointed

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out one of the differences of view, here mentioned, between India and the West. The former has always attached primary importance to subjective development ; that is development and strengthening of the individual Psyche and body according to its nature (Svadharma). This principle as I have already pointed out governs also the inter-state and inter-racial relations.

India has always held that as between the soul and its material environment the form is of primary importance. Indeed strong souls are independent of environment and make it subserve their purposes. The notion, which Mr. Archer echoes, that man according to Indian theories "rises and falls as helplessly and purposelessly as the waves of the ocean" is born of an excessive ignorance. In no country in the world has greater insistence been laid on the fact that man is free and the maker of his destiny. What therefore has to be strengthened is the organism which is the bearer of individual character. If this be done such adjustment as is

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necessary to the environment becomes easier. In India a systematic attempt has been made to preserve and transmit the Guna of the "Ids" of the germ-plasm as Weismann calls them from father to son : in the face of opposition from individual emotions and interests. Spiritual growth is mainly dependent on the organism and on the exercise of the Svadharma appropriate to it. This has been kept in mind in the evolution of the Indian social organism ; for the social aim has been self-conquest (Jitendriya) self-rule (Svarjá-yasiddhi) and liberation (Moksha) for the individual spirit or Jíva. On the other hand the social aim of the modern West has been largely the conquest of the external environment which it has sought to effect through a variance of the "Ids" entering into the constitution of germ-plasm so as to enable the organism to more and more adapt itself to the environment.

I cannot here more fully enter into this matter which is based on certain fundamental concepts of Indian Philosophy..

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Suffice to say that the factors or Gunas of the ultimate material cause (Prakriti) of both mind and matter display themselves variously not only in man but throughout all created being ; not only in the bodily matter but in the inner psychical tendency or Sangskára which gives rise to individual mind. The souls are born into bodies suitable to them and thus the four castes or Varnas were, it is said, created by the Lord (Ishvara) according to the division of Guna and Karma that is the Svadharma or the particular Dharma of each being. Without the acceptance of this doctrine, caste largely loses its significance. According to the Western view this is not so. The Christian teaching is that a soul pure as it leaves God is by special relation placed in any kind of body, which may be either good or bad, and there commences its experiences for the first time. To the Eastern, as to many Westerns, such a notion is irrational. Caste appears to the Western a hardship because he ordinarily does not believe in the past or future births.

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Man's only chance is, according to him, in this birth. The orthodox Hindu holds that the soul is born into a body which is suitable to its previous merit or demerit and acquirements; that man's caste is fixed for a particular birth; but that if it is a low caste he may by fulfilling its duties and by self-development qualify himself in future births for a higher or the highest caste. One caste does not consider itself superior by reason of wealth or social standing. Such snobbishness is a mark of class-distinctions in the West. In India a man is not despised because he is poor and of humble occupation as he often is in the West. The present caste is an indication of the measure of merit and demerit in previous births. Subject to caste rules, there is social association. The Brâhmana mind, even as it now exists, has in general a distinctive and high quality which other castes lack. This is due to heredity largely maintained, but obviously not wholly so, seeing the colour of many Brâhmanas to-day. A true Brâhmana should not give

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way to pride any more than to any other sin ; otherwise he will become a degraded Brâhmana in this birth and possibly of the lowest birth in his next life. It is a mistake to suppose that the caste-system is a “system of group morality.” Those who so speak do not know what Dharma means. Sâmanya Dharma or the general rules of morality govern all castes and all men. Each man must be truthful, charitable, just, free from pride and so forth. It is the particular rules called Vishesha Dharma which bind only members of a particular caste. As a matter of fact the high caste of a Brâhmana connotes more rigorous injunctions (Niyama) than those imposed on the Shûdra. The result which (as recently pointed out by H.H. Shri Shangkarâchâryya at Kumbakonam) the latter can attain by a minimum of Niyama, is only to be had by the Brâhmana through a maximum of the same. The followers of the Varnâshramadharma do not, like adherents of some other religions, hold that those who follow their own religious faith are less fitted for

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salvation than themselves. Any one who follows the Dharma of his own caste ; any non-Hindu who follows the Dharma of his own religion with faith in its truth and in God will necessarily rise in the scale of spiritual growth and have that material and spiritual happiness to which his actions entitle him. It need hardly be said that in fact we do not find these high ideals always kept ; nor do Christians always keep theirs. Fault is not attributable to the Eternal Dharma. The fall of the Hindu is due to his not keeping it. Thus the Brâhmanas who were once respected as the "Guardians of the Treasury of Dharma" have now (in the words of H. H. Shri Shangkarâchâryya of Karvir Pîtha at the last "All India Hindu Conference") often "become objects of ridicule and contempt." Those who should live austere and simply are now in the scramble for place, wealth, and power. It is no wonder that in the degree in which they are unfaithful to their duties their claims are resisted.

There are without doubt abuses in all

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these matters. There are also some barbarisms both in the pejorative sense, and in the sense of incomplete development, according to Western ideas. Whether these latter are always right is another matter. But what country in the world is without them in the eye of another? The missionary is apt to place before the Indian an idealized picture of "Christian" Europe: for the actual facts tell against the Christianity which he preaches to the Indian people as being a more potent influence for good than their own religion. The facts are now becoming known and some who have been there for themselves have begun to complain of deception. Those Easterns who, after this war, will read the books which each of the contending parties have written against the other will find a store of material with which to confound the pretensions of each. Meanwhile any intelligent Indian who has passed a few years in Europe can make a case against it of barbarism and wrong in the form of crime (let the criminal

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statistics be compared) vice (intemperance, sordid prostitution, white slavery and sexual perversities unknown in this country of which Elphinstone wrote "Their freedom from gross debauchery is the point in which they appear to most advantage and their superiority in purity of manners is not flattering to our self-esteem") cruelty to children and animals (in Europe societies for their protection are necessary—Kindness to and love of children are a marked trait of the Indian people and so is their respect for animal life, notwithstanding some modern cruelties amongst the low such as the carters and Goalas of the towns. In Europe also there is unnecessary killing of animals in "sport" and the horrible crime of vivisection); lack of cleanliness (the Anglo-Indian taught his home-people the daily bath): evil customs and social injustice (such as regards the latter the grinding and "sweating" of the poor); vulgarity (which scarce here exists); irreligion; crude religion, and many a superstition; political aggression and so on; all of them the more odious

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because parts of an organised system which is predominantly to-day (as contrasted with the Christian past) a worship of mere material success. All this is not to deny the presence of great qualities and virtues amongst some and the truly spiritual endeavours which these make towards the general betterment of Humanity. In truth if we were all sane and modest in our self-appreciation we should discover quickly that no people or country is free from blame. We should then effect good to others and escape the charge of hypocrisy against ourselves. If the merits of all peoples were balanced, India would appear high in the scale. Men are not yet Man. Some have been and are so. The rest are still candidates for Humanity.

IX

What then are the common religious and philosophical ideas to which I have referred? As in the case of the terms "Civilization" and "Progress," so very varying and sometimes vague notions are held as to the meaning of the word "Religion." In its most fundamental sense Religion is the *recognition that the world is an Order* or Cosmos of which each man is a part and to which he stands in a definitely established relation; together with *action* based on and consistent with such recognition and *in harmony* with the whole cosmic activity. The religious man is thus he who feels that he is *bound* in varying ways to all being; just as the irreligious man is he who egoistically considers everything from the stand point of his limited self and its interests, without regard for his fellows or the world at large. The essentially irreligious character of such an attitude is shown by the fact that if

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it were adopted by all it would lead to the negation of Cosmos that is Chaos. For the same reason all religions are agreed in condemning selfishness and in holding that in its widest sense it is the root of all sin and crime (Adharma). These acts are wrong conduct on the part of the individual limited self (Jīva) productive of suffering. The Vedānta goes further, holding that all ignorant notion (Avidyā) of such a self, whether issuing in good or bad action leading to happiness or pain, binds to the world of birth and death (Sangsāra). According to the ideas here discussed this Order or Cosmos, that is existence according to Dharma the Universal Law, is not conceived as arbitrarily produced and governed by some merely extra-cosmic God. The order or Dharma is inherent in, and manifested by, all beings and denotes their true nature and qualities; in fact that which constitutes them what they are. Morality is the true nature of man. The general Dharma (Sāmanya Dharma) is thus the universal law, just as the particular

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Dharma (Vishesha Dharma) varies with, and is peculiar to, each class of being.

To this general concept the common faith of India adds others. The universe is held to be rooted in desire for enjoyment in the world of form; that is desire which seeks for itself the fruits of its actions. Desire manifests in action (Karma) which may be either good (Dharma) or bad (Adharma). Desire governed by Dharma is legitimate on the path of worldly enjoyment (Pravritti Mârga). Man's three ends are then Law (Dharma) Desire (Kâma) and the Means (Artha) by which lawful desires may be given effect. These are known as the Trivarga of the Purushârtha. But desire should be controlled lest it stray into sin: and so that man may become more and more the master of himself. Those who seek the fourth Purushârtha or Liberation (Moksha) and are on the path of Renunciation (Nivritta Marga) generally live lives of increasing asceticism. Both kinds of action bind the individual soul (Jîva) to the world of forms: and

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necessarily so, because those souls which desire embodied life get it, whether its activity in such life be good or bad. But whilst action with desire (Sakâma Karma) whether good or bad binds to the universe of form which as such are the worlds of birth and death; yet there is this difference between the two that good action leads to happiness and bad action to suffering; not merely, if at all, in this birth, but (since the soul survives physical death) in future states of happiness and suffering and in future births on earth. For, according to views accepted throughout India, the soul is not born once only but many times both in the past and future; the conditions under which it manifests on earth being (according to the general law of cause or effect) the result of actions (Karma) of previous births; just as present actions are the cause of conditions in future births. These multiple reincarnations are called Sangsâra or "Wandering" in the Worlds of birth and death. The law of Karma is the law of action according to which man has

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made himself what he is and makes himself what he will be ; being thus the master of his destiny in the *Sangsâra* and having the power to transcend it. The world, as being limited, is transitory and liable to suffering. There is however a state of eternal blissful unchanging Peace beyond all words and understanding called Liberation or *Moksha* or *Nirvâna*, which is known as the fourth end and aim of man (*Purushârtha*). This can be realised by the practice of morality, acquisition of purity of mind through spiritual discipline (*Sâdhanâ*) and by direct knowledge (*Aparoksha Jnâna*). There is thus a moral law (*Dharma*) which, in its essentials, is the same as that held by all other peoples. Man is enjoined to follow that law ; the sanction of morality being ensuing sorrow and happiness and the necessity of right action as a preliminary condition of direct and Eternal Spiritual Experience. (*Moksha*) The universe thus exists for a moral purpose, namely as providing a field upon which man suffers and enjoys the fruit of his

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actions and wherein man may attain his supreme end which is liberation from the suffering worlds of form (Moksha) and thus the attainment of eternal Bliss. True civilization consists in the upholding of Dharma as the individual and general good and the fostering of spiritual progress so that, with justice to all beings, the immediate and ultimate ends of Humanity may be attained.

The aforesgoing statement very shortly expresses the *General Indian Religion* or Bhârata Dharma. Excluding Religions foreign to India such as the Semitic Mahomedanism, and Christianity, and Persian Zoroastrianism, the three chief Branches of Indian Religion are Brahmanism or "Hinduism" (to use a popular term) Buddhism (now practically displaced, except through its influence, in the land of its birth) and Jainism. As Professor Rhys Davids has said "Gautama's whole training was Brahmanical. Buddhism is the product of Hinduism. He probably deemed himself to be the most perfect

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exponent of the spirit as distinct from the letter of the ancient faith.” He was a Yogi who taught the principles of the Jnânakanda ; given to meditation, laying stress on the destruction of the thirst for worldly things and on compassion (Karunâ) for all beings, just as Krishna does in the Bhagavadgîtâ. It is noteworthy here that he is an incarnation (Avatâra) of the Hindu Religion and that his Avatâra succeeds that of Shri Krishna. He taught Dharma, Karma, Sangsâra, deliverance from Avidyâ in Nirvâna, practised Dhyâna and experienced Samâdhi. Buddhism is not, as this Professor says, atheistic ; though possibly owing to the later developments of Buddhism which Shangkarâchâryya combated, his Avatâra was said in Puranic times to have been for the purpose of misleading and destroying men. Nor is Jainism “atheistic.” Its first Tirthankara Rishabdeva is said in the Bhâgavata Purâna to have been an Avatâra of Vishnu ; and the 22nd Arhat of the Jainas, Shri Neminâtha is, I am told, described as a

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cousin of Shri Krishna. As regards the Jainas and the Vedânta I may refer my readers to the address of the President-elect of the Syadvad Jaina Mahâmandala in December 1903.

The General Indian Religion or Bhârata Dharma is the doctrine and practice *upon which all these three branches are agreed* that is the Doctrines of Dharma, Karma, Sangsâra, Purushârtha, Pravritti, and Nivritti Mârga and their implications above stated, as also what Mr. Archer calls "Asceticism" and "Pessimism," the true meaning of which however is stated later.

The divisions of the general Bhârata Dharma as Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Jainism have other doctrines and practices peculiar to themselves and are each (particularly the first) subdivided again into various Schools and Sects with peculiarities of their own. As it is not possible to speak in terms of all these varieties of Indian belief I write from the standpoint of those worshippers of the Brahmanical Branch of the Bhârata Dharma who are

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called Shâktas. Like all other Indian Schools they accept the common principles of the Bhârata Dharma and present on this basis a particular version of the monistic (Advaitavâda) Vedânta of the Brahmanical branch of the Bhârata Dharma.

Though Mr. Archer's understanding of the subject is incorrect he has rightly seized upon Karma, Reincarnation or Sangsâra and the theories and practices which he calls "Pessimism" and "Asceticism" as fundamental doctrines of the general Indian religion ; though he of course adds that "they are not symptoms of high spirituality or idealism in the people which has evolved and lived upon them." To refute all his statements on these matters, this short essay would not suffice. I am only here concerned (and that only in a very general way) with the notion that these doctrines and practices are the cause of the generally "barbarous" condition of the country ; that they are not the foundations of a "pure or moral" religion ; and that they have so moulded the Indian mind for evil that

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before this country can be admitted into the circle of independent peoples it must throw over these principles and adopt something more wholesome and rational in their stead. For owing to these doctrines and the Vedānta the Indian people are said to lack will-power, to be deficient in energetic dominant personality ; to be without desire and power to "progress;" to have a weak grip on life which is deemed of no value; to be dreamers holding the world to be unreal and cowardly fugitives from it.

Philosophically speaking the charge of "Pessimism" amounts to this. The Hindu, like the true Christian, says that the world is a passing thing and still more so is his life therein. However fortunate that life may be for a few, it is for the body of men mingled with suffering. For some it is practically little but suffering. Therefore perfect lasting happiness cannot be had in the world. Both of these are obvious facts of present experience. But all men seek happiness. Some Westerns in modern times

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have thought that it is possible to abolish unhappiness, sin, crime, and disease and to make the world an Earthly Paradise. May it be so. The Hindu believes that in the recurring cycles of time there is a perfect age or Satya Yuga along with imperfect and evil ages. But he (whether rightly or wrongly) does not believe it to be possible that the world can be made perfect as regards all beings at one and the same time for all the length of its existence. And if it could, he asks what then ? For he denies that any form of material or intellectual happiness can suffice to stay man's longing for that Eternal state of Bliss which is his true inner nature and is theologically called God. If this be Pessimism then all the great religions are pessimist. But he is also like the Christian optimistic. For both say that there *is* a release from suffering and an Eternal Peace. It is true that in the degree that Europe has become "modern" and "progressive" it has ceased to be Christian, either in the Church sense, or in that of

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Christ himself whose Yoga doctrines taught that true and lasting Bliss is only to be had in the union of the world in his Christ-Nature and of both in the "Father." In truth much of this Europe is not honest with itself and is not Christian at all, however much it may use the name. Nevertheless it has never been said that Europe was pessimistic until it took to these new ideas within the last half century. England in particular was once called "Merry England." But when? Before the "Reformation" when the ideas which Hindus hold in this matters, as also as regards "Asceticism," were fully dominant. But there is in fact a great deal of sadness in India. Any people who are inherently great and have achieved much but have fallen and are subject to foreign rule must be sad. If they were not they would be ignoble. And then they are materially miserable through poverty and disease. Probably few English readers are aware that as I write this there are over 30,000 deaths a week from plague and over 10,000

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deaths from malaria, not to count other-diseases, such as diabetes and consumption which is in the towns commencing its ravages. We speak of the mortality on the battle front. But what of this ? Again the country is very very poor. A large part of it never know what it is to be sufficiently fed. Everywhere there is a lack of food. Though it is of course possible that there is a strain of melancholy native to the Indian as to other highly sensitive peoples, it is to the material circumstances we must first look rather than to philosophical theories of "Pessimism." Literary men moreover are often apt to take "bookish" views. "Pessimistic" utterances are to be found in both Indian and Christian literature. They do not necessarily represent the outlook of all the persons whose race has produced them. The Catholic Liturgy speaks of man weeping and wailing in this "Vale of Tears" as it calls the world ; a pessimistic utterance if there ever was one. Nevertheless one may see in the Churches prosperous sleek men and worldly women

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reciting these words about the “Vale of tears” and then going home to enjoy life thoroughly; commencing with a Sunday lunch with the customary round or sirloin of beef, horse-radish sauce and Yorkshire pudding. Whatever their Scriptures may say, they find the “Vale of Tears” to be a happy one which they are loathe to leave. Death sorely tests the sincerity of those who hymn their desire to meet their God. Many would defer this visit. There is not the same amount of material happiness in India. But many doubtless are not too greatly depressed by the melancholy sayings of their Scriptures if they know of them. The vital impulse is nearly always everywhere insurgent in some degree against these sad reflections. As a matter of fact Hindus hold that the world is a duality (Dvanda) of both good and evil. When it is spoken of as evil, this is relative to heavenly and eternal bliss. If the evil aspect of the universe is sometimes emphasized it is with the view to stimulate man towards sustained effort to

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win his ultimate end and not to tarry on a way fraught with dangers.

Mr. Archer then demands whether there is any token of spiritual genius in "Asceticism." That depends of course on our point of view. It does not accord with his theory that India should learn to "want more wants;" nor where it is adopted will commercialism do "big business." Most will agree, in theory at least, that desires should be controlled because, without some restraint, the strength of natural passion is like to lead to sin and crime particularly when we fan the flame of desire by "wanting more wants." Ordinarily however Asceticism is understood rather as referring to more rigorous control amounting to austerity (Tapas) positive self denial, and mortification of the flesh ; sometimes associated with the notion that the carnal and material world is evil. As regards the last the world is what we make it, as the old Buddhist Krishnâchâryyapâda said. The nature of Asceticism varies according to the degree

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of its practice and the reason for it. Hinduism requires a certain amount of Asceticism even for those living in the world, such as occasional fasting, just as the Catholic Church does. Neither are excessive. Those however upon the path of renunciation are naturally given to stricter, though not irrational, Asceticism, whilst some (such as a class of Hathayogis and others) have pushed their practices to great extremes. The same happened in the West in the early days of Christianity and the Catholic middle ages. Professor Hopkins the American Orientalist, who writes superciliously of Indian religion says that Asceticism is not part of Christianity. This extraordinary statement about what I suppose is his own religion, or which at any rate ought to be known to him, is a gauge of the value of his opinions on the religions of India. Jesus has said in His Yoga doctrine that men should leave all, follow him and take up the cross of self denial. So far from "wanting more wants" they are not to lay up the treasure "which

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moth and worm corrupt ;" they are not to save for the morrow, but to be " as the lilies of the field ; who toil not neither do they spin." And so we find hundreds of men and women, who in the belief that they were following Him, abandoned the world and practised extreme austerity ; Simon Stylites standing on a pillar, Heinrich Suzo torturing himself throughout the years, Joseph Labre keeping himself dirty and verminous, and the Blessed Lidwine of Schiedam drinking the water mixed with blood, pus, and scales of skin with which she had washed the limbs of lepers and other suffering diseased. In all this exaggeration one can discover the usual western coarsening of the teachings of Jesus. Mr. Archer brings up " the filthy and disgusting creatures daubed with ashes " and so forth. As a matter of fact most of these are quite clean, the ashes being applied after the morning bath. Some classes of religious mendicants seem to outward view dirty ; and a number of persons exhibit a doubtful, when not

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fraudulent, "Asceticism" for ha'pence. Some are truly spiritual men. Mr. Archer misunderstands the doctrine of detachment when he says it is not profound at all (what Indian doctrine is so to him?), but "merely the exaggeration of a common and somewhat pussillanimous rule of prudence which is "anti-social" "incompatible with rational ethics" "hedging against destiny" and the like. As in so many other matters he is here beyond his depth. Detachment does not necessarily mean remaining away from the world but is compatible with every action therein, including all forms of social service. It means that what is done is so accomplished without selfish purpose and not for the fruit. A man who does good because it will be advertised, because he will profit by it, because he will get social credit, or because he will go to heaven is not superior to him who does all this detachedly for goods sake and without hope of gain for himself. Even those who, like the western monk, leave the world do so because of their

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dispassion (Vairāgya) and not because according to a Western notion and in Book-makers language they are "hedging" on anything. Seeing that men are of varying worth and animated by various motives it would be hazardous to deny that some of these may have been actuated by fear of the world or other weak motive. When all is said the instances of true and rigorous asceticism anywhere are rare. Man is so prone to pleasure and fearful of pain that we need not worry ourselves over the thought that the world is in danger from asceticism. It was never less so than in the present age. Let us however encourage the simplification of life even at the cost of running counter to the traders philosophy.

Let us look at the matter broadly and freely and then we shall see that as a matter of fact there is no religion which more justly and logically balances the claims of the life of the world and the life of spirit as does Hinduism. Its principles are opposed to all false Asceticism. This is seen in the Purushārtha, the Ashramas, and the

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distinction of life upon the two paths of enjoyment (Pravritti Mârga) and renunciation (Nivritti Mârga). The Trivarga of the first are Morality (Dharma) moral desire (Kâma) and the means (Artha), namely wealth and so forth, by which lawful desires may be lawfully realized. Man in the world is encouraged to seek all these. In the first two Ashramas life was lived as the continent student (Brahmacharyya) and as the married householder (Grihastha). Save rare exceptions all were called upon to marry. The fourth Purushârtha is Liberation (Moksha) to which man is exclusively bent in the subsequent forest life (Vânaprastha) and as the mendicant (Bhikshu), who, without ought of his own, sought union with the Source of all. In the first two stages man was on the path of enjoyment; that is lawful enjoyment worshipping God; in the last two when household duties were done and commencing old age wended to death, entry was made on the path of renunciation and union was sought not with Spirit as embodied in

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the universe but as transcending it. This was the round of life for all, except for a few highly developed souls who might enter the path of renunciation at once without first going through the stage of the householder. How supremely beautiful and balanced this ancient ideal was, none can know but those who have studied it and fathomed the profound principles on which it rested ; principles which harmonised the World and God in one whole. This glory has to-day largely passed like others. Nevertheless it remains a wonderful vision which only a truly civilized people could have seen and practised.

This blending of worldly life free from "asceticism" with its underlying Source is also profoundly effected in the Shâkta consciousness of the unity of the Activity of Forms and of the Formless Peace from Whose Power (Shakti) they issue. As the Kularnava Tantra says, Yoga and worldly enjoyment are then one (Yogo bhogâyate) and *the world itself is made the seat of liberation* (Mokshâyate Sangsâra). What

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modern western doctrine surpasses this in which man is taught that he need not flee the world for therein he may, in himself, harmonize the Ultimate Reality and Its Appearance? For such, one's country and one's family, and the whole world are but forms of the Mother-Power (Shakti) and service of them is service and worship of Her. This doctrine is a marvellous synthesis of the conflict between Spirit and Body. Then when all is realised as the Supreme Consciousness, desire therefor is burnt out. Without ascetic rigour it has passed away. The statement that Indian doctrine is "a flat negation of the value of life" is flat nonsense. Life is supremely valuable both as the finite expression of the Infinite Being from which it comes and as affording the opportunity (the only one) through which man may reach It. Over and over again the Scriptures speak of the value of human birth which is so hard to get (Durlabha) and which man has only attained after millions of births of upward striving. Constantly does it warn him to avail himself of this

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opportunity to work himself higher, for otherwise he becomes a “self-killer.” Life has value both in itself and as the stairs (*Sopâna*) up which man mounts to his end.

It is therefore of course real. Like many critics of Indian beliefs Mr. Archer talks foolishly of Reality. The Indian (we are told) does not believe in the “reality of the world.” In fact he is said to be only artistic at the cost of the betrayal of the principles for which India stands. Mr. Archer apparently therefore thinks it would be dangerous to trust the Hindu with so real a thing. He might not take it seriously to the danger of himself and others. Through his “fatalistic” doctrine of Karma he would not have the will to set things right ; and his “asceticism” and “pessimism” might tell him not to bother himself any further with the matter. Is it necessary to say that the world produces the same sense of reality in an Indian mind as it does in any other ? And Indian philosophers too notwithstanding their “enervating metaphysic” give common sense their support.

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Of the three standards Nyâya-vaisheshika, Sâṅkhya, and Vedânta, the first two expressly contend for the reality of the world. But it is also “real” in the Vedantic schools, in one of which only (the so-called Mâyâvâda Vedânta) we hear speak of the “unreal” world. But in what sense?

The term “real” must be understood according to its definition. Whilst to others a thing may be real although it changes, in this form of Vedânta the truly real is that which was, which is, and which will be, changeless in all these “three times.” And this is God only, “as it was in the beginning as it is, and as it ever will be world without end,” to borrow Christian parlance. When therefore it says that the world is not “real” it means *in this sense*; but not in any other. It is real to us whilst it lasts and its material cause or Mâyâ Shakti is an unexplainable (Anirvachaniya) mystery which, whilst not real, is also not unreal. The Western also admits that some day this universe must pass. Shangkara the

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great Vedantic doctor of this school expressly refutes the idealism of those Buddhists who were alleged to deny the reality of the objective world, saying (as he does) that the outside world is everywhit as real as the inner mind which perceives it. Both are the creation of the Lord (Ishvara) and exist as a real parallelism on our plane and as an apparent dichotomy of that supreme Consciousness in which there is neither without nor within. It is doubtless said that the world is a "Dream": but to whom? Not to man in the waking state, but to the Lord, the projection of whose Consciousness as Divine Imagination (Srishtikalpanâ) it is. But no school is so philosophically fallacious as to hold that there can be an object without there being some Consciousness to perceive it.

Lastly there are the doctrines of Karma and *Sangsâra*, which missionaries commonly regard as their greatest obstacle in the way of the Christianisation of India and which Mr. Archer has discovered to be also a political obstacle. Other English writers with

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solicitude for the welfare of this country also deplore the alleged ill-effects of the doctrines of Indian philosophy on the Indian people; and some few of the latter, re-echo these lamentations. These doctrines are said to be one of the causes of the enfeeblement of will, absence of energy and disinclination for "progress" which stands in the way of the full application of the principles of Western political "Liberalism" which appears to be Mr. Archer's creed.

The doctrines are, it seems, a chief cause of their indolent notion that "life is a shoreless expanse in which generations rise and fall as helplessly and purposelessly as waves in mid ocean, the individual life being everywhere dwarfed and depreciated" to cite Mr. Archer's words. Moreover the acceptance of these doctrines is one of those things which convince him that India is not spiritual. These theories he says are "shallow" and the second in particular is "an untutored savage fancy borrowed probably from aboriginal tribes." "The theory

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is an empty one and there is little proof of spiritual genius in having evolved it (the aboriginal authorship is momentarily forgotten) and still less in having clung to it for three thousand years." This implies some considerable obstinacy in the Indian people. I am sure of this, that they would only be too glad if the doctrine could be shown to be untrue, for the thinking and spiritually minded among them have a horror of repeated birth in the suffering worlds. What however they would say is:— "Show and prove to me any truer doctrine than mine." Their reason compels them to reject the theories which Christianity or other creeds and persons offer them. Nor, whether their theory be right or wrong, are they foolish in this refusal. The philosopher Hume, and if I remember rightly Cudworth also, considered the re-incarnation doctrine the most rational theory of immortality. For as Professor William Knight wrote "Pre-existence (a doctrine which assumes several forms) has fewer difficulties to face than the rival hypotheses."

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I am not here concerned to establish its truth, or to refute the errors of Mr. Archer and others as regards it. It may be admitted that it has its difficulties. And what theory has not? Indians whose doctrines are criticised would do well if they asked their critics to state *their own* theories first, in which case it may be found that they involve still greater difficulties. Cardinal Newman, an admittedly subtle mind, said in his *Apologia* that there was not a Christian dogma which was not infested with intellectual difficulties, and that speaking for himself he could not solve any of them. Theories with such abundance of difficulty cannot, it will be said, be rational. It may seem, even to those who are not its adherents, certain that there is a deep truth underlying this doctrine, whether or not its Indian form of Karma and *Sangsâra* fully, and in every respect, correctly expresses it. Further it is obvious to any impartial thinker that from the point of view of reason there are less difficulties in the Indian doctrine than in any other.

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But whether the theories are true or not they are certainly not "shallow." Professor William Knight says that "if we could legitimately determine any question of belief by the number of its adherents the *quod semper*, *quod ubique*, *quod ab omnibus* would apply to metempsychosis more fully than to any other." Once practically the whole civilized world embraced it, as the greater number (nearly two-thirds) of the Earth's peoples now do. It has been known since the dawn of history and has been held by both primitive peoples and the highly learned. Whilst the doctrine seems to be a native and ineradicable growth of the oriental world, it appears since the spread of Christianity rather as scattered instances in the Western world. It is said to have been held by the ancient Egyptians, (though this is disputed) by some of the Greeks notably by Empedocles, Pythagoras, Plato and the Neoplatonists, and was taught in the Mysteries; it was also held by some of the Latins, and by the Gauls, the Druids, and followers of the

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Edda. It occurs in primitive Christianity ; such as (to take a notable instance) in Origen. In fact some contend that the Christian Gospels when rightly interpreted assume it. (See "Reincarnation in the new Testament" by J. M. Pryse). It appears sporadically again in Europe in the Middle Ages. What however resisted this belief was the Semitic Judaism (I do not speak of the Kabbalists) and its two Semitic offshoots, Christianity and Mohamedanism. Christianity an (historically) aggressive and persecuting religion either largely drove it out of Europe or prevented its adoption there. Mohammedanism worked with the same effect in those parts of Asia which underwent its influence. Nevertheless in Europe the doctrine has never entirely disappeared and in recent times has gained a number of adherents. Those who are unaware of the extent to which the re-incarnation doctrine has received approval or adoption from Western thinkers should read Mr. E. D. Walker's book on "Reincarnation;" itself based on the larger standard treatise of the

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Revd. W. R. Alger, "A critical history of the doctrine of a future life." Amongst those who have held or written favourably of this "shallow" theory may be counted the grand Italian philosopher Giordano Bruno burnt alive by the Church as a heretic; the German philosophers, Schelling, Fichte (younger) Leibnitz, Schopenhauer, and the great poets and writers Goethe, Herder, Lessing; the English Christian Platonist Dr. Henry More and others; and the philosophers Cudworth and Hume; the French and English scientists Flammarion, Figuier, Brewster; and the Modern Christian Theologians Julius Muller, Dorner, Ernesti, Ruckert, Edward Beecher and W. R. Alger. There are many others whose names may be found in the works cited as also large numbers of poets, the Seers of their race. A recent work is that of the metaphysician Professor McTaggart who in his Essay on Pre-Existence argues that the Immortality of the Soul involves its pre-existence. The case of the Revd. W. R. Alger is remarkable. In the first

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Edition of his Work (1860) he characterised the theory as a “plausible delusion unworthy of credence.” But after fifteen years of study he, though starting with this unfavourable conclusion and with all the natural prepossessions of a Christian clergyman, gave in the last edition (1878) the final result of his ripest investigations in endorsing and advocating the doctrine.

Mr. Archer’s allegation of its “shallowness” is only one, amongst many, instances of the unreasoning prejudices with which he judges this country’s beliefs. Not to mention other great names, let us take that of the world-renowned Buddha only. Neither he nor they were “untutored savages” or shallow thinkers which they must have been if they adopted and preached what was in fact a “shallow” theory.

Neither however this nor some other Western critics understand these doctrines: since they have not sufficiently studied the principles on which they rest. For the Karma doctrine is distinctly metaphysical.

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It is not a mere empirical generalization but has a strong rational basis. It is not to be identified as some Western writers do with the physical law of causality. The gist of the criticisms made is that it is opposed to the freedom of the will and to morality. Both these statements are as wrong as any can be.

All Western Idealists, as does Brahmanism, posit a Self unchanged in the midst of Its changing experiences. Therefore the Karttā (Doer) the Karma (action done) and the fruit or result of the action (Phala) must be distinguished. Karma being distinct from the Karttā cannot dominate the latter. That is the Self is not co-ordinate with, but distinguished from, the action it determines. We may compare in this connection Kant's distinction between what he calls the Intelligible and Empirical characters. The Self is in fact according to Indian notions as free as it is according to Western Indeterminism. To talk as some do of the " inexorable " or " fatalistic " law of Karma, as though it reduced man

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to a machine, is to have misunderstood the elements of the subject. All Indian schools admit the possibility of liberation. If Karma were inexorable how could it be possible to gain liberation? Liberation is thus the proof of man's essential freedom. What however the doctrine says is that when man does an action he must take the consequences (Phala) of it and this whether he remembers it or not. Lack of knowledge or memory, for instance, of an injury suffered by a child at the moment of birth does not prevent the consequences of injury ensuing. If through precedent actions our present condition is unfavourable, we are called upon to make good Karma to maintain our moral state and lay the seed of future good conditions. And though this may be in cases difficult owing to the load of evil results we carry, it is not impossible; for the Self which performs the action remains always free. In the same way it is said in Christianity that however unfortunate be the conditions in which, according to this theory, a man is placed at birth,

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through no antecedent action of his own, he has yet sufficient free will to surmount by its exercise all temptations. So far than from Karma being fatalistic it is the doctrine according to which *man is master of his destiny*. He has made himself what he is and makes himself what he will be, notwithstanding unfortunate conditions which are due to his previous actions and which, according to the Christian theory, have no cause but the arbitrary, and in its result, (as the Hindu would say) unjust will of God.

Leaving this point, it is sometimes said that the ethics of the Karma doctrine fail to draw that vital distinction which exists between good and bad action. This also is quite wrong. Wholly unselfish good action (Nishkâma Karma) does not bind, and with true spiritual knowledge leads to liberation. Selfish, though good, action, that is action done with desire for fruit (Sakâma Karma) leads to happiness in this world and in Heaven. Action which is both selfish and bad leads to suffering in this world and in

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Hell. There is thus the most emphatic distinction between all three. What Hinduism says is that liberation from the world cannot be had, even by good actions, if done with the desire to get benefit for oneself in the world. How can a man be free of the world who binds himself by his desires to it? As long as man has any selfish, even though legitimate desire he cannot attain the highest state. It has been also charged that there is no room in the doctrine for social service and philanthropy. This is possibly based on an erroneous interpretation by some Indians who, like some Christians, are ignorant of the true meaning of their Scripture. Thus it is said that it is no use to alleviate the lot of a suffering man because he is working out his Karma and this would be to interfere with the operation of Karma. But how does the objector know this? Is he the Dispenser of Fruits so as to know what has been awarded? Because a man's bad Karma has brought upon him suffering, it does not follow that it is to be unmitigated

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suffering. It in fact may be his Karma to suffer subject to certain relief. Moreover, and this is the principal point, a man who refuses help to others, whether for such reasons or otherwise, stores up bad Karma for himself. Instead therefore of putting forward futile objections let him devote himself to social service and philanthropy. The principles of the Vedânta which accepts the Karma doctrine require this; for he who serves another serves the Self. The Vedânta gives the most profoundly based reasons for all charity and brotherliness. Dealing with this absurd charge that the Vedânta is defective in morals Dr. Deussen says "the fact is nevertheless that the highest and purest morality is the immediate consequence of the Vedânta. The Gospels fix quite correctly as the highest law of morality 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' But why should I do so, since by the order of nature I feel pain and pleasure only in myself and not in my neighbour ? The answer is not in the Bible but it is in the Veda in the great formula

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‘That thou art’ (Tat tvam asi) which gives, in three words, metaphysics and morals together.” So it is said Paropakâro hi paromo dharmah (“To do good to others is the highest religion.”) It is true that in Hinduism as in Catholicism numbers have left the world. Perhaps, as an Indian friend of mine has said, it was Shangkarâ-châryya who gave a predominantly ascetic and other-worldly character to conduct, wishing by his Maths to preserve the teaching of Hinduism against the incoming Moslems. I think we may go further back and find the cause in Buddhism which stressed one side of that which is more balanced in Brahmanism. For my part I do not admit that the true Indian recluse or the true Catholic Monk or Nun are useless. The objection is too materialistic. All humanity is raised in their persons which shed a spiritual influence upon the striving world around them. Nevertheless there is nothing antisocial in the Vedânta as such, nor in the Gîtâ the “cream of the Upanishads” which teaches the doctrine of

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selfless action in the world. So too the essentially practical Shâkta version of Vedânta holds that “the world is the seat of liberation.” The truth is that this and other difficulties are largely “discovered” simply because those who raise them have wished to find them.

Let us now leave philosophy and look at the facts. Are the Indian people wholly inactive and without will or hope ? What is this political movement in India which has roused Mr. Archer to write his book ? What are the “social reform” movements which Mr. Archer and others approve ; some perhaps because activity is thus, in part at least, drawn off from what they think to be inconvenient political directions. What are the movements (retrograde as he and they would call them) manifested by the Brahmanism which still to his disgust “rears its head ?” What are the religious movements to restore and revivify Hindu religion which he calls “aggressive anti-rationalism,” though Hinduism in its

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essentials is one of the most rational of religions?

Some will say that this activity is due to Christianity, others that it is due to Western secular influences. If so the Karma doctrine, in the case of those who still uphold it, has not stood in the way. But still more strange is it that long before Western influences were at work in this country, and for thousands of years, India has lived and now survives under the load of this supposed soul-deadening, will-weakening anti-social doctrine of Karma and *Sangsâra* and still obstinately (as Mr. Archer complains) "raises its head." Whence has it drawn the strength to do so? Notwithstanding this alleged lack of volition it is evidently difficult to destroy Her resolution to be Herself. Another Western journalist has offered the "explanation" that "Hinduism has endured because it had failed." Others will think that it is not necessary to have recourse to senseless paradox, and that the attention of these writers has been given to "progress" in the common Western and material

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sense and even to hustle, fuss and self advertisement, rather than to the strong silent will, and unobtrusive action, which have sustained this country throughout the ages.

X

Brahmanism which is to-day in India the most important branch of the Bhārata Dharma is based on Veda and is sub-divided into several sects who interpret the Vaidic texts in differing ways, worship God under particular aspects, and whose rituals in some respects vary. There are, as I have often elsewhere pointed out, matters of substantial agreement; nevertheless there are others of difference such as (for example) the identity or otherwise of the individual and supreme Spirit, with consequential differences as to the nature of the state of liberation (Moksha). Some of these differences hardly affect the question here discussed but there are others of importance in this matter, in so far as, whilst all forms of Hindu belief provide an answer to the criticisms which have been made against them, it may be contended (as I do) that

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the form I here shortly describe meets them more strongly and effectively than others.

India has appreciated, as one of her people has said, the "dignity of objective facts" and daily sensuous experience. She would have been very silly if she had not done so ; nor do such facts allow themselves to be ignored. But experience is not limited, according to Indian notions, to sense-experience. There is spiritual experience which is recorded in the Veda and which has been attained in varying degree by the spiritually wise. This as authority (Shabda Pramâna) is the proof of supersensible (Atindriya) truths. These truths, though not attainable by the reason alone, are not inconsistent with it. For as man is made of a piece, what is irrational cannot be spiritually true. No country has placed greater reliance on reason than India has done. "A reasonable saying should be accepted even from a boy."

The Tantras of the Shâkta âgama accepting and based on the Vedantic texts

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teach the identity of the individual (*Jīvātmā*) and Supreme Spirit (*Paramātmā*) and proclaim that "All this (the world) is verily Brahman," though in a different manner from those who hold that the universe is *Mâyâ* in the sense in which that term is used in the transcendental (*Paramârthika*) section of *Shangkarâ-châryya*'s interpretation of *Vedânta*. I have explained this and other technicalities elsewhere. Here I very shortly deal with the matter from its practical aspect as constituting the principles on which Indian civilization is based. For that civilization has a religious basis, vises a spiritual aim and organises society so that this end may be attained. For this reason it is necessary to enquire into matters which may seem alien to the subject to an English reader. Indian thought always touches the root of things.

According to Shâkta teaching, the Universe is a manifestation of the Power (*Shakti*) of the Supreme Consciousness or Self which is theologically called *Shiva*

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“the good and auspicious” or God, who in His aspect of manifestation of Power is known as the Great Devî, or Divine Mother of all. The two are one. Consciousness (Shaktiman) and Its power are one. They are twin aspects of the One: Shiva being the static changeless aspect of Spirit or consciousness and Shakti being the kinetic or changing aspect of Consciousness, in which it veils and negates Its infinity into finite forms. For creation is the negation (Nishedha vyapârarûpâ Shaktih) or limitation of the infinite All (Pârna). The Infinite Consciousness thus *finitises* Itself. He and Her, or Consciousness and Its Power, as transcendently resting in Themselves, (Svarûpa-vishrânti) are the Perfect or Ideal Universe, the formless state of supremely blissful Love (niratishaya premâs-padatvam, ânandatvam) in which the Self experiences its Self (in Whom the whole universe is) as pure consciousness. Consciousness manifests through its Power, that is, It presents Itself to itself as the limited universe. This manifestation is due to the

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ripening in consciousness of the subconscious impressions (Sangskâra) left by past experiences and which evolve into mind and matter of present worldly experience. This is the imperfect and finite universe of forms in which Shiva, without loss of His own natural and changeless Beatitude, enjoys and suffers as man and all other sentient being. God though of His own nature blissful, yet *as* and *through* man suffers and enjoys. Consciousness or Spirit involves Itself in matter and then gradually evolves Itself therefrom. This process is the Evolution of forms through plant, animal and human bodies, which in greater and greater degree admit of the manifestation of Consciousness or the immanent Shiva. The difference between man and animal is not of kind but degree. But with man entrance is made into the world of conscious morality. Shiva is thus the Soul of the World and the world is Himself as Power (Shakti). Man who is spirit, mind and body is divine. He is divine not only as spirit but as mind and

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body. For these are divine power, there being none other. Man is a "little Brahma Spheroid" (Kshudra-brahmânda) that is, microcosm. Everything which is outside is within him. As the Vishvasâra Tantra says : "What is here is there. What is not here is nowhere" (Yadihâsti tadanyatra Yannehâsti natat kvachit). There is no need to throw ones eyes into the heavens to find God or Shiva. Man as spirit is God. Man as mind and body is the Power (Shakti) of God. Man is thus God and His Power. As God's power man and the universe are real. The world is real though it changes and does not last for ever. The world is the experience of Shiva in the form of all beings and His experience is never unreal.

Effort is real. Effort is possible because man is the free master of his destiny. There is no fatalism. Man has made himself what he is, and he will be what he now makes himself. What is to be the manner of his striving? It must be according to morality (Dharma) with a view to make good Karma and with the consciousness (in

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the highest) that man is one with the Active Spirit in its form as the universe. To those who have this outlook (*Vîrabhâva*) on life, every physical function and thought is a religious rite (*Yajna*). Every being or thing is the great Mother in that form. Whilst life should be lived with simplicity and restraint, there is no need of asceticism, though those who really wish for it may adopt it. Thus, whilst in some forms of ritual there is fasting before worship, it is said that *Kâlikâ* is angry with those who thus worship her. "For if *Shiva* and *Jîva* are one, why give pain to *Jîva*?" There is no need to renounce anything except ill-thinking and ill-doing which bring ill-fruit. For what can man renounce when all things and beings are seen to be the Mother? To renounce them with such consciousness is to renounce Her. To cherish wife and children, to feel for and help fellow-man, to serve one's country or race is to serve and worship Her. The service of them is service of the Self. What is the end of effort? Full self-realisation

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as Spirit vehicled by mind and matter so that man is truly in conformity and harmony with the active immanent Shiva and the developing world-process ; and then the realisation of man's final end in unity with the formless and transcendent Spirit thus gaining final liberation from the world of forms. True progress is the gradual release of Spirit from the bondage in which It has been seemingly involved. True civilization is the organisation of society, so that the individual man and his community may attain his and its immediate and final end that is enjoyment and liberation (Bhukti and Mukti). For the general good was the object of the Indian social organization. And the community has governed itself. There is in this doctrine itself no depressing Pessimism for Ananda or Bliss is seen in all ; there is no asceticism for those who feel no call therefor, since the doctrine is one of enjoyment (Bhoga). There is no Fatalism or lack of will, for man is known to be master of his destiny and alone responsible

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for his past and future. It cannot be charged with being "Anti-social" for life is fully lived in the world in the knowledge that man and his fellows and all beings are kindred expressions of the one Mother-Self. No grander and all inclusive doctrine has been taught.

In another book of Mr. Archer, criticising Mr. H. G. Wells "God the Invisible King," he says that the latter "has come a good deal in contact with Indian religiosity;" and that "this craving for something to worship points to an almost uncanny recrudescence of the spirit of Asia in a fine European intelligence." He adds "It is possible that an epidemic of Asiatic religiosity may be one of the sequels of the war." He says "It has sometimes seemed to me that the one great advantage of Western Christianity lies in the fact that nobody very seriously believes in it. 'Nobody' is not a mathematically accurate expression, but it is quite in the line of the truth. You have to go to Asia to find out what religion is. If you cannot get so far,

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Russia will serve as a half way house : but to study religion on its native health.....you must go to India. I cannot believe that anywhere between Suez and Singapore there exists that healthy Godlessness *that lack of any real effective dependence of any outward power* which is so common in and around all Christian Churches. In the land of Om anything like freedom of the spirit is probably very rare and very difficult. The difference does not arise from any lesser stringency in the claims of Christianity to spiritual dominion but rather I imagine from a deep-rooted divergence in racial heredity. We Western Aryans have behind us the serene and splendid rationalism of Greece and Rome. We are accustomed from childhood to the knowledge that our civilization was founded by two mighty aristocracies of intellect to whom the religions of their day were, as they are to us, nothing but more or less graceful fairy tales. We know that many of the greatest men the world ever saw while phrasing their relation to the

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Deus absconditus in various ways were utterly *free from that penitential supplicatory abjectness which is the mark of Asian salvationism*. And though, of course, the conscious filiation to Greece and Rome is rare, the habit of mind which *holds up its head* in the world and feels no childish craving to cling to the skirts of a God is not rare at all." This very interesting passage invites a lengthy comment, the more so that with much of the attitude here revealed many a Western will have a fellow-feeling. All classicists will salute the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome, and it is in the English temperament to dislike all abjectness, religious or otherwise. But I must pass on with the observation that Mr. Archer has here again misunderstood his subject. Many of his criticisms on Mr. Well's "Veiled Being" and "God-King" are effective, but will not be so as applied to the logically developed metaphysical Indian concept of Ishvara and Para-brahman which are the supposed sources

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of Mr. Well's theory. If, however Mr. Archer understood the highest thought of India, he would know that it teaches that man is *not* dependent on any outward extra-cosmic power but on himself and Self ; that it as completely affirms as any other doctrine the claims of reason and the freedom of the human spirit, and that it is "utterly free of any penitential supplicatory abjectness." If such a charge can be made at all, it is against Christianity and those kindred forms of Indian dualistic beliefs which make man a suppliant before, and dependent on, some Power which is not himself. In fact, the Christian charge against these high doctrines is that they are not penitential or supplicatory but err through that blasphemous overweening *pride* which makes man himself (in his essence) Divinity. Mr. Wells speaks of him who has not accepted his "God-King" as a "masterless man." "But is it really," Mr. Archer asks "to our Western sense, a misfortune to be a masterless man ? If any one is irked by that condition, the Roman

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Catholic Church holds wide its doors for him." According to Shâkta Vedânta, man is his own master. The self makes homage to the Self. World-enjoyment is the self's and Liberation is Its peaceful nature. The heroic-man (Vîra) does not flee from the world through fear of it. His doctrine is not anti-social, for life is fully lived in the world in the knowledge that all men and all other beings are kindred expressions of the one Mother-Self. Nor does he cling to any other than the Self. He holds the world in his grasp and wrests from it its Secret. There is no fatalism or lack of will, for man is known to be the master of his destiny and alone responsible for his past and future. Escaping from all the unconscious driftings of an Humanity which has not yet realised itself, he is the illumined master of himself whether developing all his powers on earth or seeking liberation therefrom at his will.

But the "Rationalist" may say that all this is only the metaphysical dreaming of the Indian people. Well, what do Mr.

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Archer and those of his way of thinking offer them in its stead ? They are “to want more wants” and at the same time to cultivate “higher mundane ideals.” Why ? Let us suppose that, as is not unlikely, man in the process of “wanting more wants” should turn from “higher mundane ideals” and elect for the more popular lower mundanities for which Western civilization offers so luxuriant a provision. It is then said “Appeal should be made to loyalty to Humankind ” with a capital letter. But what is Humankind that we should be loyal to it ? Since the first men fell from natural harmony they have been each others enemy, except where religion has taught them better. Mr. Archer says that all that is needed is “to kindle a sentiment (one might almost say) to awaken an instinct of loyalty to *something* higher than our personal and family interest: *something* not ourselves that makes for or rather demands righteousness.” He here perilously approaches the contemned metaphysic. What is this “something ?”

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How does a "something" demand? If it does, why call it "something?" How do we know that it exists? What warrant has Mr. Archer for this affirmation and, in particular, that it is not ourselves? Why not suppose that it is the conscious Higher Self? What is it that it should make a demand and why does it do so? Why should we obey the demand and what will happen if we do not? All such half-baked thinking ill-qualifies for a criticism of the great Philosophies of India which say that there is a Supreme Spirit who is manifested by all beings bound by righteousness (Dharma) as the Law of their nature and that there is an ordered and just universe. It is this Supreme Spirit which, one with the Inner Self of man, is higher than the personal interests which are the expressions of the limitations in which Self binds itself through Its power. Loyalty to Humankind is called for, because it is the manifestation of the one Spirit which is in and manifests as all men. Its sanction is the happiness and suffering

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which follow in harmony with, or resistance to, the world-order and therefore world-peace which is a reflection of the Serene Ground of all that is. What is the proof of all this? The world experience of every man who knows that ill action leads to suffering; and the higher spiritual experience which is had by those who are Masters of our Race and Incarnations of the Soul of the World.

XI

One may argue as one will as to the greatness of Indian civilization, but the fact will remain that the Indian people have been, and still are, a subject people governed by foreigners; a fact which, it will be contended, is inconsistent with the possession by them of true morality. For on the world-path (Pravritti Mârga) a free and independent spirit which looks to itself to do the work of the self and does it with courage, vigour, and adherence to racial ideals is morality. In short, a complete and free manhood is true morality and those who are politically and culturally subject, by that very fact have it not. Freedom, again, is the sign of true spirituality. That glorious word Svarâjya-siddhi involves in its fullest sense the effective rule of the self by the Self in all the planes spiritual, mental and material;

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for this autonomy is not, as in the Western sense of the word, merely material and political but freedom of the soul ending in Liberation itself.

Mr. Archer and others attribute the lack of this-world morality evidenced by the present subjection of India to an arrested development, or to the vicious principles on which its civilization is founded and to the false ideals it holds. In the same way, some lay to the charge of the Christian religion which preaches "peace on earth to men of good will" the present Carnage and its wealth of Hate. In either case the fault lies not so much (if at all) with the principles but is due to neglect and wrong application of them, and to the failure of those who profess to hold these principles to state them rightly, and to make them effective to-day. In judging, moreover the cause of the present state of India, it must be remembered that all peoples pass through periods of rise and decline, of activity and rest according to the rhythm which governs the whole

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universe. India has been for sometime past in a cycle of depression which may mean either Her approaching death—India's final Pralaya ; or merely a state of inertia, corresponding to the Nitya Pralaya which is one's daily slumber (Sushupti), from which she will rise refreshed in the morning of a new day. If it be the first, then India has been preserved until such time as the West and a new Eastern civilization are ready to receive the truths which She has taught. If it be the second (and the stirring of life may be said to show it) India will, in the essentials of Her civilization, remain, in whatever way her external social structure may be re-formed to meet the needs of the time. In either case these essentials and in such sense "India" will endure until the World-dissolution. I here, however, speak of India as the particular expression of those ideas as existing in fact to-day.

Before a conclusion in the first sense is reached, we must ascertain the cause of the present conditions and see whether they

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are removable. It will be time then to consider whether Her civilization is at fault. Those present conditions are attributable both to causes which were in operation before the arrival of the English and to causes which have since arisen. The first cause is the decline or inertia which rendered India open to the Mussalman invaders, and the second includes the same together with other special causes which have come into play by reason of the introduction of the western civilization of India's present rulers through whose influence, on the other hand, this country is again showing signs of a freshened vitality.

What is wanted is Power (Shakti). It is wonderful to see how throughout the world, in East and West, this idea of Power is spreading concomitantly with the consciousness of man's essential Divinity. If there be one people whose doctrine (whatever be their practice) preaches self-reliance, it is India. For She alone has taught in its fullest form the doctrine of the Self. If to-day all are not self-reliant in fact, it is

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due to bodily weakness, ignorance and want of application of these truths. It is curious to note how the so-called "progressive" nations of the West have been self-reliant in fact, notwithstanding a religion which, in its purely Christian form, preaches humility, self-abasement and dependence, and how India has been lacking in self-reliance despite the fact that the highest form of its religion teaches that man is the master of his destiny, that he is essentially one with the Cosmic Power (Prapancha Shakti) and that complete autonomy (Svarâjya-siddhi) is his goal. The Shâkta Dharma is a perfected type of this doctrine of the worship of this Mother-Power.

Power (Shakti) is physical or material and psychic or mental, and spiritual. This Shâstra teaches that man is a Magazine of all power. In every man there is this "Inner Woman" as a Shâkta Sâdhaka aptly called Her. The problem is how to make Her awake (Prabuddha). With the mass of men we must commence with the gross physical vehicle (Sthûla deha.) The

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first fact we notice is the weakness of the body. This is due to the great poverty of the mass of the Indian people. And so food is lacking. Food is Power, for it is the material source of both physical and psychic Power. Annam is Brahman. Salutation, therefore, to Annam. Ill-nutrition induces disease. As I write some 30,000 deaths have taken place in a week in India from Plague and some 10 to 12,000 weekly from Malaria, due in part at least, it is said, to disturbance of natural drainage caused by railway embankments and to the silting up of rivers. Consumption, too, is rapidly spreading. An English doctor recently told me that it was "decimating" (I use his own word) the student population and poorer homes in Calcutta to-day. In varying numbers these deaths have been going on for years past. Effects breed again their causes, and we therefore see lack of attention to those principles of hygiene and sanitation which the ancient Smritis and customs prescribed, as does Western science to-day. The con-

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nection between poverty and disease is shown by the fact that it is nearly always the poor who suffer.

If food be wanting and if the body be unhealthy, the mind becomes weak. For the mind is fed by food. Without health and strength of body there is listlessness sadness and lack of will and energy. Let India be fed and these will disappear. It is not, as Mr. Archer and others suppose, Karma and Transmigration, Asceticism and what not which are primarily at fault, but lack of food and the spread of disease. Then in the renewed body mental power will generate. The mind is the soul and the body is dependent on it. If the people's soul be lost, then all is lost. It is not yet lost but it is yet not wholly out of danger. When in 1834 Macaulay's Educational Minute decreed that India was to receive through English education the civilization of the West, it was then, it has been said, that ancient India was first to any great degree moulded by foreign invaders and a new India was born. Professor

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Seeley wrote that “never was a more momentous question discussed. “ We were led to stand out boldly as civilizers and teachers. Macaulay’s Minute remains the great landmark in the History of our Empire considered as an institute of civilization. It marks the moment when we deliberately recognised that a function had developed on us in Asia similar to that which Rome fulfilled in Europe.” To an Indian, self-conscious of the greatness of his country’s civilization, it must be gall and wormwood to hear others speaking of the “education” and “civilization” of India. India who has taught some of the deepest truths which our race has known is to be “educated.” She whose ancient civilization ranks with the greatest the world has known is to be “civilized.” And yet this policy of English Education was necessary in the sequence of Indian history ; otherwise, it would not have been initiated and carried out. This resolution and the work done thereunder has been in several aspects for the benefit of India.

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But like all else it has had its evil side and dangers. For as the Hindu proverb runs, there is nothing wholly bad nor yet wholly good. It was good in that it gave new life and a widened outlook to this country. The evil has lain in the fact that the Power of the West, working in a weakened Indian body, tended to overlay and suffocate the Indian soul. A class arose, and still, to some extent, exists, which finding everything Western, to be good, neglected its own ancient heritage; which lost soul-life, became imitative and lived upon the borrowed ideas of others and not upon its own. This way soul-weakness lies. We can never be strong through others' souls, great though they be. Life may be roused from without, but action must proceed from the inner source which is the own Vital Self. We may awake a sleeper but he must talk and walk of his own power. Each hemisphere can learn from the other and the West can bring to India with profit to Her the knowledge it has gained during the last

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century when India was wrapped in a crust of inertia. But the true function of English Civilization is to act as a blister to rouse India from this inertia.

“What a pessimistic view” some one said to me. The remark is characteristic of the ordinary Western standpoint which regards the function of the West to be not the arousing of the ancient spirit of Indian civilization to new life but the supplanting of that civilization by its own. To me there is no ground for pessimism but rather for rejoicing in the fact that other cultures than my own will survive. The whole world will benefit from a variety of vital self-active cultures just as it will lose by the suppression of any which are of worth, and will suffer by imitative cultural automatisms. I believe in Svadharma. Live and let live. Each to his own. “You are always speaking in terms of difference” said another to me. Yes I do so speak; for difference is a present fact and I deal with facts. Difference is in nature itself and I

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want no cultural or other Kidgeree. But I also believe that there is an Unity behind all these differences the varied expression of the One Self. And if we recognise and act on that belief, we shall each hold to our own self-expressions without hate or oppression of others. It may well be that as the world goes on, the differences between civilizations may lessen. For all we know they may some day disappear. But meanwhile the duty of each is to perfect his own type in accordance with Svadharma, so that he may become a fit part of the future cultural unity which may be. The reason is that in this material world, as in that of Spirit, all types when perfected are closer to one another than they are in their undeveloped and imperfect state, and a good cultural whole can never be made up of indifferent parts. I have, therefore, my moments of angry wonder as I see the increasing vulgarization of the fine and (in an Eastern sense) aristocratic life of India, the betrayal or neglect of past traditions and culture,

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the senseless imitation of foreign ways simply because they are foreign and the many shams and falsities of modern Indian life. Not the least thing which this country can learn from the British and the Irish (with else which they can teach) is the necessity of faithfulness to racial ideals. How many Europeans have been even in partial degree "hinduized" (if that term can be applied to any) as compared with the thousands who have been anglicised ? To a Western true to such ideals, it seems inconceivable that a race should adopt with avidity a foreign language, neglecting its own ; as also foreign ideas and customs, neglecting and even, as some seem to do, condemning its past cultural inheritance. And yet such has happened and many have become, as I have elsewhere said, the mere mind-born sons (Mânasaputra) of the English. This is the reason for the obvious poverty of much of the political thought in this Country which, though cast in the mould of masters of political thinking, should nevertheless be original, inspired by

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Indian ideals and have an eye to the particular Indian need. I once asked a leading Indian why he thought in this way and his apt answer was "Because I have had an English education." So again, we find the Chit-System applied even to the Upanishads; which some hold to because some Western or other has given them his approval. One may legitimately set off against one Western's depreciation another Western's praise but if the doctrine, of the Upanishads is true, it is so because it is true and not because even a Western philosopher of world-repute may think so. This same dependent spirit is observable in smaller matters, as in the case of a Bengali friend of mine who was invited by an anglicised countryman to come and taste "puffed rice" from America, which turned out only to be the common and despised country Murhi, yet not so fresh and good; but then it "had come from America." So, again, the ancient custom of taking sour milk (Dayi) which some looked upon as an old folly was respected as a scientific prac-

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tice when Professor Metchnikoff discovered the Bulgarian Bacillus : and so on and so forth, for " puffed rice " is to be found in religion, literature, philosophy, art, science institutions and manners. To use the recent words of Mr. Lawrence Housman " India must decide whether She wishes to be herself or a reflection of others. Is the movement of India for the Indian people to be accompanied by a subsidiary movement for India to be peopled by Indians coloured to European taste. Is India now trying to find Herself, or somebody else—her own soul or another's."

It is in the Indian cultural inheritance that the mass of the Indian people will gain mental power. The same is true of spiritual power. I am wholly against such as themselves hold to Indian religion not because it is believed to be true but because it is Indian. This is to prostitute what is most sacred in man's nature. Honesty is an essential of true religion. I am, however, equally against those who, without belief in Christianity and without desire

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that their children should become Christians, hand them over to Christian Mission schools simply because they are cheap or because such education brings other worldly advantage. The result is that spiritual mess in which the mind of some English-educated Indians flounders to-day. This is the worst of all Kidgeree. One thing is clear and will be admitted by all, that there is no true power unless it be based on and supported by religion, Hindu, Mahomedan, Christian, Positivist or whatever else it be. A Christian may still be an Indian provided that in holding to the essentials of Christianity he does not also think it necessary to become a "Sahib." The Hindu religions have that in them which meet the needs of every capacity and temperament. *Prima facie* they are best for those whose ancestors have evolved them. Before they are rejected let them be examined. If they are then found to fail in giving knowledge and inspiration, some other should be adopted or devised. A recent missionary book ("Goal of India")

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by W. E. S. Holland) quotes the prayer with which the Indian National Congress opens its sessions, which beginning with "Oh most gracious God and Father" proceeds with Christian wording and sentiment to speak of "Providence," "thy unworthy servants," thy Holy name, spirit and will, "glorify thy name" and so forth and then winds up with "Amen." "Why" the author asks "do they not acknowledge Christ and come over to the Christian Church?" His answer is incorrect. The real answer is not that the author and users of this prayer believe in the institutional Christianity of the missionary but the language of Western religion is imitated just as political agitation and the cultural forms of thought of the West is imitated. It is true, however, that though the English-educated Indian does not as a rule accept any of the Western creeds of Christianity, many have been largely affected by its spirit and even forms. Those even are sometimes to be found who unjustly deprecate their own people on

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that account. So an English-educated Bengali told a friend of mine that Hindu boys were not fit to become Boy Scouts because the latter had to eschew impure thoughts and a Hindu boy would think of the Linga. This offensive and ridiculous statement was a suggestion from a missionary-environment. Those Hindus who worship the Linga see nothing indecent in it. It is the missionary and some other Westerns who do so.

It was Svâmî Vivekânanda who said that when India becomes English, she dies. If this be so, all intermediate steps towards such a result spell weakness. When the sufficiently nourished and healthy Indian has sought for mental and spiritual power in his own cultural traditions and has failed to get it, it will then be the time to discuss whether his want of success is due to his alleged Barbarism or to the faulty principles of his civilization or not and if so in what respect and degree.

There is now and has been for sometime past a re-action towards Indian culture

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due to a rising racial consciousness and lately to the exposure of some of the weaknesses of Western civilization by the Great War. There are many who now say "Physician, heal thyself." It is now also perceived by some that the effort towards political independence will bear no real fruit if in the process the Racial Soul is lost. In other words, the cultural question is of equal importance as the political one. It is possible that in this reaction everything western may be in the near future as unduly disparaged as it was formerly, by some, indiscriminately appreciated. High praise is now more frequently given to all things Indian. If it be held that this is sometimes overdone, it is a fault on the right side. Anything is better than servile imitation of, and submission to, other's judgments. But it is just this reaction towards independence of spirit which we happily see in India to-day of which Mr. Archer complains. He constantly speaks of the "insensate arrogance" of the Indian people and of their overween-

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ing pride in the civilization which he calls 'Barbarism.' He denies that they or any other people are a "Chosen People."

To have a better idea of oneself than the facts warrant is not an infirmity of the Indian people only. So an Englishman is apt to regard a "foreigner" (even a Western) as something inferior. A quite amusing and recent instance of this occurred in the case of an English lady on a visit to Germany just before the War. The lady complained to a friend of mine of the annoyance caused by the rules imposed by the German Police. On being told that they existed for all foreigners (Auslander) she exclaimed indignantly "But I am not a foreigner. I am an English woman." So strong was her notion of the inferiority of the foreigner, that she could not imagine that under any circumstances, even in the heart of Germany, she could be deemed to be one. Most Englishmen entertain a high idea of their country and its civilization and the claim is even heard that they are the "moral leaders" of the world. Their

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greatness has been voiced in much English literature and is with some an Imperial cult. We have all heard of German claims though “Deutsche ueber alles” is mistranslated. It does not mean “Germany above everybody else” but the nation’s interest above that of the individual. Yet even in the midst of complaints against Teutonic vaunting an English author has recently published a book under a title which could hardly be found in any but political England, for it is called “Christian Imperialism.” Therein its author, Mr. A. C. Hill, an enthusiastic believer in the imperial destiny of Britain seeks to show that the growth of Her Empire has “on the whole been ruled by a religious impulse.” A more absurd and inflated claim it would be hard to imagine. England acquired Her Empire not from “religious impulse” but to serve Herself, whatever be the spiritual ends which She may have thus unconsciously forwarded. He then glorifies the British character as that of a race (*pace* Mr. Archer) “Chosen of God for a high mission;” holding that

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British theories of life "have been stamped with the seal of Christ's approval;" "that no nation has been more keenly sensible of the moral value of Christianity;" that the "literature of England is an Epitome of life as it has been known to all thinking men" and so on and so forth. One cannot, of course, place too much stress upon the opinion of any individual author, but there are many others who have vaunted England's greatness and in some things rightly enough. Thus Mr. Hill (though his own claims are pitched in a high key) thinks that he has been surpassed. For his assertion of "a superiority on our part" is coupled with a condemnation of the popular Evangel of Mr. Rudyard Kipling "as being too reminiscent of the swash-buckler." The English, as other peoples, have good cause to be proud of many achievements. Though Patriotism always tends to exaggerated claims, there can be no question of the greatness of their race. Facts are the proofs. But the sense of racial superiority which they and other

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Westerns have as regards the Eastern (justified in some degree by their energy and the actual fact of dominance) is likely to, and does, lead to an inordinate self-appreciation, narrow exclusiveness and obtuseness of understanding when estimating types of culture different from their own. It has often been pointed out by Indian writers that the Western is wont to take his own standard to be the measure of excellence and all which falls short of it is considered to be either bad or of little worth or absurd. There are but few who will judge another culture in a detached spirit. This obtuseness, and lack of insight, bred in the spirit of race-pride is, it has been rightly said, the source of great cleavages not only between Western and Oriental peoples but between the former themselves. On the other hand, it may be conceded that there is racial vanity in India as elsewhere. There are, for instance, a considerable number of people who without reason give themselves airs ; for instance, those who are always talking of their great Shâstras and

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yet never read them and those who, being in a futile way materialists themselves, have western materialism always on their lips as if all Westerns were benighted in spiritual darkness. An Indian writer after referring to some observations by an English author to the effect that the present War was the outcome of the prevalence of Western civilization and materialism said that he did not do so to enable every Indian worldling (and to-day there are many such) to vaunt Indian spirituality; adding "a man is to be judged not by the ideals of the best men of his country, dead or living, but by the ideals to which his own life bears witness. Most of us are as materialistic as most Westerns, with this difference that we are feebly and languidly materialistic on a small scale whilst they are strongly and energetically materialistic on a large scale. But the real question is, are we living up to it? It should also be considered whether we are as ready as Western idealists are to admit our fault and reform ourselves." There are, on the

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other hand, in this country as in the West truly spiritually minded men, for without some spirituality, no civilization, even inefficiently, endures. It is the fact that there are "chosen" peoples just as there are exceptionally endowed individuals. Greece was a chosen people for her wonderful art and philosophy; India for her religion and profound metaphysic; and other peoples have been in various ways distinguished.

XII

India is now approaching the most momentous epoch in its history. To answer the question why this is so would lead me into the subject of practical politics which I do not here discuss. The country will also be subject to the play of monster economic forces. Already and for sometime past Indian markets have been in increasing degree linked up with those of the West, with results to Her poor already showing themselves. For the first time in Her history she will be thrown into the World-vortex, political, economic, cultural and social from which her past form of Government has (I believe providentially) preserved Her. Will She have the strength to keep Her feet in it ; I hope she may. The next question is, will She keep Her feet and remain Indian ; that is, will She preserve the essentials of her grand civilization. Again that is my hope. But if

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so, it will be because She has had the will and the strength to guard and uphold Her Indian Self. Our Western civilization is a great Eater. We consume. What is called a "higher standard of life" has hitherto meant with us that we consume more and more. Industrialism instead of satisfying, has increased our Western needs. "We want more wants" and if our own store has not satisfied, then we have gone to that of others. It has been well said by Mr. Lawrence Housman that "in the pursuit of wealth every country had become in more or less degree non-self-supporting from within, dependent on power to control or to influence favourably to its own interests outside conditions. And the more it was dependent for its prosperity or for its sufficiency or supply from without instead of from within, the more it was involved in the larger international struggle for existence which has ended in the bloodiest and most devastating war known to human history;" the final accounts of which, I may add, have yet to

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be rendered. India must then be on Her guard to preserve Herself unless She is content to be assimilated to others and to thus lose Her Racial Soul. Where can She gain strength to save Herself as Herself except from Her own cultural inheritance. The universal assertion and adoption by all peoples of the noble and essential principles of Her spiritual civilization would lead to a world-peace.

The East has been the home of all the greatest spiritual teachers. India has taught that the Universe is in its ultimate ground Spirit ; that what is material is the expression of the Eternal Spirit in time and space ; that Man is essentially either that self-same Spirit, or a part of, or akin to it ; that the Universe is governed by a Just Law which is the very nature of its true expression ; that all Life is sacred ; that Morality is the law of humanity, which is the master of its destiny and reaps only what it has sown ; that the universe has a moral purpose, and that the Social Structure must be so ordered as to subserve it ; and many

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another sublime truth which is the warrant of Her high civilization, which may yet bear fruit not only in India, but throughout the world, thus justifying her claim to be the Karmabhûmi.

Every man and every race can only continue to truly live by being himself, by being itself, otherwise he and they are nothing. But this race will not perish if it continues to worship the Mother-Power greater than the greatest, manifest in the littlest, seen in Shâkta worship not as an image of sorrow, but joyous, crowned with ruddy flashing gems, clad in red raiment, (*Lauhityam etasya sarvasya vimarsha*) more effulgent than millions of rising suns, with one hand granting all blessings and with the other dispelling all fears. Hinduism has deeply perceived that fear is an essential mark of the animal and of the animal (*Pashu*) in man. The fearless win all worldly enterprises and fearlessness is also the sign of the illuminate knower.

In any case India must in order to live be faithful to Herself as each must be

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faithful to himself. As the Indian scripture says, "The greatest religion is Truth," which means all honesties. According to the natural scheme of things each whether "orthodox," or "reformer," must act as he sincerely believes for the benefit of his country. None are doing wrongly who act according to their conscience and judgment, sincerely thought out and held. All honest endeavour works for the world-ends of Ishvara the World-Lord whatever be the difference in aims and means. Sincerity may be a link to bind all. None have the right to forsake their duty as they sincerely conceive it to be, because they may fancy that what they work for will not happen. How can they know this with certainty? And even if they could, it is the design of Ishvara that what He wills to be shall only come about after every obstacle thereto has been surmounted. For these obstacles are part of His wisdom. Never should we think of failure. Those who do have already begun to fail. But if we look at things largely, we shall know that to fail

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is nothing if we have striven to succeed : that effort and its result, limited though it be, is achievement. We are all (though free) in the service of the World-purpose, the organised expression in time, space and matter of the undying spiritual Self. Reverence, therefore, to the highest Self by whatsoever name men may call It—a Self which is both immanent in the universe of forms which are Its Power and yet formlessly transcends it.

But there are some in this country who, in this period of transition and scepticism due to foreign influence, believe in none of such things and who are as materialist, though often less usefully so, than any Western. Modern Western civilization great though in several respects it be, is, in so far as it is divorced from religion, poison for Eastern peoples. Such persons in fact think that India has suffered through its religion. She would, they think, have "got on " better without it. Such have learnt nothing from present events which, like a flash of lightning, make clear the dangers amidst which

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men have walked in darkness. If, notwithstanding warning, those who have hitherto been the custodians of these great traditions neglect or, reject them, they will themselves perish and will deserve to perish, or they will suffer a worse lot, namely a lasting deprivation of the high place in the world which the greatness of their forbears had sought to make for them. They may just exist, but as what and how ?

The chief religious and philosophic concepts of India are in their essentials imperishable. Whether the Indian people hold to them or not they will be taken up and added to the cultural wealth of the greater amongst the white Aryas (as they are commonly called) of the West from which race in ages past the coloured peoples of ancient India, in part at least, received them. These essential ideas will then in any case remain because, as humanizing man for the spiritual end which they place before him, they are those of a great and true Civilization.

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